Al-Jazeera, Intellectuals, and the Deconstruction of Social Realities

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This is to certify that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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Abstract

This thesis analyzes the processes of framing that took place within a matrix comprising influential intellectuals, a potent Arab media outlet whose audience amounts to tens of millions of Arab spectators, and the vibrant social movements calling for political change in Egypt and Libya in 2011. It explores the various forms of meaning construction carried out by al-Jazeera and the intellectuals it regularly hosted to comment on the uprisings in both countries as they occurred. By addressing two case studies defined by different contextualizing variables, the thesis illustrates how al-Jazeera's commentators were part and parcel of the network's output and its daily engagement with its audiences. The thesis examines the means through which these intellectuals capitalized on the channel's powerful broadcast imagery to articulate their interpretations of the unfolding uprisings and propose alternative political possibilities. It argues that the network's intricate processes of meaning construction rendered it an institutional organic intellectual with an ability to communicate persuasive messages and accordingly incite mass mobilization. It also contends that al-Jazeera's attempts to void long-sustained regime legitimacies, by countering their narratives and critically engaging with their political rationale, have contributed to redesigning political realities in the cases under study.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Following the eruption of the Tunisian uprising that toppled President Zine el-Abidine Bin Ali in January 2011, al-Jazeera's impact on the Arab public sphere reached a new zenith. The Qatari sponsored network played a significant role in shaping a contagious discourse that destabilized long sustained status quos in various Arab countries. Al-Jazeera capitalized on the intense influx of events in Arab states witnessing popular unrest to promote a revolutionary rhetoric and reinforce a process of mass mobilization. Apart from the case of Bahrain in which regime change conflicted with Qatar's geopolitical interests,[1] al-Jazeera was supportive of local demands for political transformation. In Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria, the network's engagement with popular uprisings was characterized by extensive coverage of events, a dynamic interchange with the public, and an ardent tone endorsing calls for fundamental change. Al-Jazeera had always been thought to be a magnifier of dissent in the Arab World. Yet for the first time in modern Arab history, a number of state authorities and institutions were standing on the brink of collapse due to domestic popular pressures. And for the first time since its advent 15 years earlier, al-Jazeera was interacting with a lively discourse that manifested itself on the streets rather than with static audiences or passive ones, and was actively contributing to the deconstruction of social realities in various states around the Arab World.

Although tens of Arabic speaking networks provided wide coverage of the uprisings, al-Jazeera's broadcast material differed from all others in terms of magnitude, nature, and impact. Not only did the network deploy considerable technical capabilities and human resources, but was also the first to utilize social media platforms to expand

[1] Rabie Barakat. "New Media in the Arab World: A Tool for Redesigning Geopolitical Realities" (MA diss., Lebanese American University, 2011).

its sources of news and visual content. In the wake of the uprisings, al-Jazeera altered its policy regarding its refusal to air footage provided by citizen journalists[2] and became the first to heavily rely on alternative sources of information. Its aim was "to identify key bloggers before protests broke out [and to count on them to] verify information [thereafter] and act as citizen reporters".[3] Yet the network's impact during the uprisings resulted from more than obtaining exclusive news material and amplifying certain angles of the popular discourse. It was rather an outcome of its ability to make sense of events and to assemble them in a meaningful constellation. In this regard, al-Jazeera challenged the regimes' narratives of events. It also contributed to discrediting their rationale and to dismantling the authoritative image they had managed to build and maintain for decades. The network's various forms of framing were meant to further provoke protesters to pursue a full-fledged political transformation. For that, al-Jazeera regularly hosted intellectuals to articulate its oratory and therefore to enhance its impact on the popular discourse. These intellectuals commented on the uprisings' daily occurrences and emphasized the protesting masses' need and aptitude to pursue alternative political possibilities. As they did so, they rendered the outlet a space for vital interaction between the public on the one hand, and its broadcast news output and intellectual articulations on the other.

Research Question

This research accordingly highlights the matrix comprising of three interplaying elements during the Arab uprisings: a powerful media outlet, influential intellectuals, and a revolutionized public sphere. It examines a discursive process of representation construction generated by al-Jazeera and its televised intellectuals by addressing the following question: *How did al-Jazeera's intellectual engagements with the Arab*

[2] Interview with a senior presenter on al-Jazeera. The interview was given on condition of anonymity on October 26, 2014.

[3] Rachel Bartlett, "Journalism.co.uk #media140 – Al Jazeera's early start reporting revolutions", *Journalism.co.uk*, accessed April 5, 2014, https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/-media140---al-jazeera-s-early-start-reporting-revolutions/s2/a543674/.

popular uprisings contribute to the deconstruction of social realities and to the promotion of alternative political possibilities?

The thesis thus aims to explain the process through which al-Jazeera deployed its intellectual output, not only to dismantle regime narratives, but also to deconstruct the social facts of the regimes themselves. It therefore argues that the intellectual facet in this process performed a dual task. The first pertains to the channel's creation of ideational constructs to counter regime narratives and promote alternative political possibilities, and the second relates to the actual reconfiguration of existing social realities. This discursive intellectual engagement with the popular protests and their prospected outcomes resulted in the generation of new institutions on the rubble of old ones. It was a process that al-Jazeera and its guest intellectuals contributed to through various forms of meaning construction.

In the course of answering its central question, the thesis presents a theoretical framework that builds on scholarly work on intellectuals, framing and social movements, and social reality construction through linguistic practices. This framework is used to explain how al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals took part in delegitimizing existing regimes and in promoting fundamental political transformations in Egypt and Libya. The chosen case studies demonstrate two different contexts with distinct characteristic features and intervening variables. They help explain how the network's intellectual output played a role in remolding social realities with varying degrees, and how the extent and forms of this engagement were contingent on elements defining the regimes in question and the social realities they govern and regulate. For example, the network and its intellectuals delineated an array of strategies for engaging with the regimes in Egypt and Libya, as each generated different reactions to threat. In this regard, al-Jazeera provided a more specialized form of coverage in the case of Libya, as it hosted local commentators to complement its two Pan Arab intellectuals that had previously played a role in framing the events of the uprising in Egypt. Moreover, its intellectuals' approach was more aggressive in the case of Libya than it had been regarding Egypt. This was primarily in response to the Libyan regime's expression of

vast animosity towards protesters and its overtly vocalized intent to crush the uprising from the very beginning.

Al-Jazeera reached out to dissident activists and opposition figures in Egypt and Libya and provided them with a platform to voice their demands and concerns all throughout its coverage. At times, the channel even indirectly contributed to the organization of protests, as calls for assembly were aired live and reporters took part in promoting demonstrations prior to their actual occurrence.[4] Yet the network's main "added value" to the discourse was its intellectual output that allowed it to engage with it as a constructor of meaning, a potent orator, an inciting mobilizer, and an actual strategist proposing alternative political possibilities. This connection with the social movements in question rendered al-Jazeera an *institutional organic intellectual* as shall be defined and explained in later chapters. Its overall output was inclusive of a multi-faceted engagement with events, starting from the basic essentials of news dissemination and image production and transmission, and ending in its more active role as a platform for proposing means to redesign existing social facts and for facilitating their reconfiguration.

Identifying the literature

The topic of televised media and its representational power has been engaged with by a variety of social scientists in a range of disciplines. Of those were Jurgen Habermas who introduced and conceptualized the term *public sphere* in the early 1960s. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas examined the shifts in the sphere's formation in Europe, where growing capitalism and industrialized culture redefined the sphere after its initial crystallization in the late 17th century. Habermas explained that the bourgeois public sphere was formed of institutions of information (newspapers and journals) and political discussion (parliaments, public assemblies, coffeehouses…) where interactive debates took place thus allowing the public to play a role in shaping state policies. Towards the end of the 19th century, however, the public

[4] Interview with Dina Samak, al-Jazeera's reporter in Egypt during the uprising, September 9, 2015.

sphere mutated along with the emergence of the social-welfare state. Henceforth, giant corporations and media elites have manufactured public discourse and have replaced rational argumentation and consensus with passive consumerism and mass democracy.[5]

Unlike Europe, in the Arab World, the public was far from impacting its local and foreign state policies through rational deliberation, and its elites were incapable of launching any form of communicative discussion that helped formulate a collective opinion regarding critical issues of general concern. The public sphere, in the sense initially proposed by Habermas, was virtually non-existent, albeit Arabs invoked it "to make sense of an emerging transnational public opinion critical of states and not reducible to their interests".[6] Yet the public's engagement with political affairs was undergoing gradual change, one that had initiated more than 10 years prior to the outburst of the popular uprisings. In this regard, Lynch, borrowing Habermas's famous book title, examined the role of al-Jazeera in reconstructing the Arab public sphere, which he defines "in terms of active arguments before an audience about issues of shared concern".[7] According to Lynch, the "emergence of satellite television networks established the technical possibility of an Arab public sphere", but "only when al-Jazeera refocused the satellites away from entertainment and toward politics (…) did it become a public sphere".[8]

Al-Jazeera made use of the tremendous vacuum characterizing the Arab mediascape in order to acquire its highly recognized posture. In this regard, Zayani contends that the network "not only fill(ed) a media void but a political void" as well.[9]

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[5] Douglas Kellner, "Habermas, the Public Sphere, and Democracy: A Critical Intervention," in *Perspectives on Habermas*, ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn (Illinois: Open Court Publishing Company, 2000), 259-287.

[6] Marc Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public: Iraq, Al Jazeera, and Middle East Politics Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 29.

[7] Ibid, 32.

[8] Ibid, 33.

[9] Mohammad Zayani, ed., *The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media* (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 2.

Its "pluralist media discourse"[10] was thought to have expanded the medium of debate in the Arab World and to have breached authoritarian restraints limiting freedom of expression. El-Oifi adds that the channel has triggered "a profound shift in the way the Arab mediascape functions" and "may potentially contribute to the reconfiguration of the political systems in the Middle East",[11] a prediction that proved true years later. Satellite media, precisely al-Jazeera, was thus thought to have the potential to trigger change and to play a vital role in redesigning the regional system, though none of the scholarly contributions previous to the Arab uprisings explained how that might actually occur. Pan Arabism and transnational rhetoric were thought to constitute a powerful tool in this regard. Zayani argued that al-Jazeera "promotes an Arab Nationalist discourse wrapped in a democratic style" and "reinvigorates a sense of common destiny in the Arab World".[12] Yet he asserted that one "should not be under the illusion that satellite TV can dramatically change society or revolutionize its institutions".[13] To Zayani, the impact of news media was therefore bound to institutional dynamics, local and regional, and media output was incapable of inciting profound and revolutionary change. The visible media effect on the Arab uprisings challenges this hypothesis, as does this thesis.

Albeit considerable work has been done on televised media in the Arab World and on al-Jazeera in particular as the next chapter explains in detail, the vast majority of contributions accentuated the channel's ability to instigate deliberations regarding controversial political affairs rather than to actually reconfigure social realities as this thesis suggests. On an international scale, the impact of televised media on global politics was first sensed in the 1960s, during the American war in Vietnam. The term *Vietnam syndrome* mirrored the belief that footage of destruction and human casualties highly contributed to mounting domestic pressures that forced Washington to withdraw its troops from the country. This hypothesis was contested, however, as some believed

[10] Ibid, 18.

[11] El Oifi, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 66.

[12] Zayani, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 7-8.

[13] Ibid, 35.

that the impact of the media had only been secondary in shaping US foreign policy.[14] The role of televised media was more tangible in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however. In Eastern Europe, where the decay of communist regimes had reached its acme, cross border television played an influential role in catalyzing mass protests. Footage of vicious security measures in East Germany was aired on West German television and seen by East Germans, while images of the uprising igniting the Romanian city Timisoara and calling for the downfall of the ruling dictator Nicolae Ceausescu were broadcast on Hungarian television.[15] The time lag separating Timisoara's rising from protests in different parts of Romania proved the absence of a revolutionary scheme aiming to oust Ceausescu.[16] It was thus thought that televised images of mass protests had successfully transmitted the popular fervor.

The course of media evolution reached another peak during the 1991 Gulf War, as CNN's reporting from Iraq marked the first live coverage of an international conflict. The channel screened unedited footage of the event, as if inviting the public itself to participate in interpreting the news and making its own judgments.[17] For the first time, breaking news stories took the form of live audiovisual transmissions, and Middle Eastern audiences enjoyed uncensored coverage after years of reliance on state monopolized media. This audience, however, was limited to a narrow and elitist social stratum with access to satellite media at the time.[18] Thereafter, CNN's engaging coverage of crises and wars in the mid-1990s incited American action in several parts of the world, such as Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. The term *CNN effect* came to mirror

[14] Philip M. Taylor, *Global Communications, International Affairs and the Media since 1945* (London: Routledge, 1997b.), 108 - 115.

[15] Naomi Sakr, *Satellite Realms* (London: IB Tauris, 2002), 4.

[16] Victor Neumann, *Between Words and Reality: Studies on the Politics of Recognition and the Changes of Regime in Contemporary Romania* (Washington DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2000), 67.

[17] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 84.

[18] Ibid, 84, 85.

the impression that the outlet was changing both, the projection of war onto television screens worldwide, and the rules of international relations as well.[19]

The above highlight the impact of television on various political events in the 20th century. Scholarly attempts to explain the representational power of televised media evolved with growing evidence that this power could contribute to altering social realities. The role of intellectual production via the media was not particularly underscored in this regard, however, nor were the mechanisms used to achieve social reality construction. In the past three decades, the relationship between media and social constructivism gained further significance in light of revolutionary advancements in the realm of telecommunications. Various contributions addressed the issue from a perspective of *reality* versus *representation*. In this context, David Harvey once argued that "power in the realms of representation [has become] as important as power over the materiality of spatial organization itself"[20]. Harvey was one of many advocates of social constructivism who emphasized the role of postmodern tools in compressing time and space and in establishing representational primacy over tangible realities.[21] His inquiries in *The Condition of Postmodernity* serve as a general reference in this regard.

Other examinations go beyond the general reference and specifically pertain to the role of media in drawing mass perceptions. The most important were those presented by Jean Baudrillard, whose valuable contributions have added a philosophical dimension to media studies, especially to the works examining media effect on collective cognition. Baudrillard rejects the idea that media output in the postmodern era is a mere reflection of reality. He rather thinks of it as an implosive space allowing for the collapse of meaning,[22] one that has come to constitute a form of *hyperreality*, in which

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[19] Philip M. Taylor, *War and the Media: Propaganda and Persuasion in the Gulf War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 7.

[20] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 5.

[21] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1990), 284 – 325.

[22] Gary Genosko, *McLuhan and Baudrillard: The Masters of Implosion* (London: Routledge, 1999), 77 – 99.

representations (or signs) undermine reality (or content) itself. Thus, due to this primacy of representation, media have gained further leverage in the scope of reconstructing the "real" by intensifying image production and massifying ideas and experience.[23] In Baudrillard's words, when compared to the imaginary, "the hyperreal represents a much more advanced stage insofar as it manages to efface even this contradiction between the real and the imaginary".[24]

The *hyperreality* discussed in this thesis relates to the output broadcast to millions of Arab spectators during the Arab uprisings. This does not imply, by any means, that the uprisings were not "real", but that they were represented in ways that eventually facilitated their expansion. Building on Baudrillard's thoughts, Kellner once argued that television "collapses critical distinctions, exhausts meaning, and volatizes reference".[25] In the same sense, media representations during the Arab uprisings have surpassed reality as a reference and have come to constitute a referential system of their own. Their reconfiguration of events, emphasis on some, and disregard of others have created a discourse mainly based on representations of reality.

The accounts abovementioned address the revolutionary impact of media on today's world and their problematic relationship with reality. Prior to these contributions was Marshall McLuhan's introduction of media (in the 1960s) as a form of message capable of reconfiguring social affairs, regardless of the content that the medium carries. Thus was McLuhan's famous slogan "the medium is the message", in which he (and later Baudrillard) placed "content and use as subordinate to form, and dialectical analysis as subordinate to technological determinism".[26] In this sense, media were

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[23] Douglas Kellner, "Baudrillard: A New McLuhan?", Illuminations: The Critical Theory Project, UCLA Graduate School of Information Studies, accessed: March 3, 2012. http://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/Illumina%20Folder/kell26.htm.

[24] Jean Baudrillard, *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 145.

[25] Genosko, *McLuhan and Baudrillard,* 67.

[26] Ibid*,* 84.

thought to have gained an autonomous status that allowed them to impact social reality rather than to merely provide a space for exchanging ideas. McLuhan once argued that environments "shape their occupants" and that "the user or content of any medium is completely conformed to the character of this man-made environment".[27] During the uprisings, Arab media were operating in accordance with McLuhan's definition of them: as an environment that "transforms our perceptions governing the areas of attention and neglect alike".[28] Yet al-Jazeera's construction of meaning in the course of redesigning social realities presents a model whose role exceeded this function. The following chapters present illustrative evidence to support this claim.

Theoretical and empirical contributions

Despite the valuable attempts to conceptualize the interplay between media on the one hand and the public sphere and socially constructed realities on the other, references to the role of intellectuals in this matrix were generally absent, whether in the overall literature on media or that specifically pertaining to the Arab World. This thesis aims to fill this gap by examining the discursive patterns of social reality deconstruction that involved intellectuals and an influential media outlet during the Arab uprisings. By examining the triangular relationship between the media, intellectuals, and the public sphere, we construct a conceptual model that adds to conventional explanations involving the impact of image production and transmission on collective perceptions and cognition. The model presented highlights how meaning creation through intellectual articulations on a media platform plays a role in dismantling social facts.

The theoretical contribution of this thesis revolves around two key issues. The first pertains to the idea that media institutions can operate as organic or class-bound intellectuals - a task that was performed by al-Jazeera during the uprisings: As an institutional platform, the channel banked on its guest intellectuals to produce ideas,

[27] Ibid, 4.

[28] Marshall McLuhan, "Education in the Electronic Age," in H. *The best of times/the worst of times: Contemporary issues in Canadian education*, ed. Alexander Stevenson et al. (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1967), 4.

construct meaning, and act as a "permanent persuader" of its spectators regarding matters of the discourse in question. The notion of an "institutional organic intellectual" has not been previously engaged with, whether in terms of connecting intellectual output to media or otherwise. This is one way in which the thesis differs considerably from existing accounts of media and its representational power. The second central issue relates to the idea that this form of mediated intellectual production is capable of redesigning social realities. The thesis shows how various forms of meaning construction through intellectual articulations, coupled with intense imagery and a vast influx of news material, could contribute to deconstructing social facts when instantaneously disseminated to large numbers of dynamic spectators. This is a novel approach regarding media, intellectual participation, and social movements alike.

Accordingly, this thesis empirically illustrates how al-Jazeera's intellectual output contributed to deconstructing regime institutions in Egypt and state institutions in Libya during the Arab uprisings. It conveys how the channel's editorial policy was vocalized through its guest intellectuals as a means to further validate it and increase its impact on the political discourse in Egypt and Libya. The case studies to follow exemplify the processes of meaning construction that al-Jazeera and its intellectuals have introduced to systemically undermine the legitimacies of the regimes in question by disassembling their ideational constructs. Each case study uncovers how meaning construction was achieved through various modes of framing, and how the processual phenomenon involving mediated intellectual content and dynamic social movements has altered existing power structures and contributed to the reconfiguration of political elites.

Methodology

Applying the theoretical framework that the thesis proposes requires data collection and analysis. For that, this research uses primary and secondary sources of literature to form its empirical base. In terms of primary sources, the research mainly relies on tens of interviews that were conducted on al-Jazeera with its regularly hosted

intellectuals during the uprisings and were uploaded on YouTube. All available interviews that fall within the timeframe of this study are examined, before extracts that substantially relate to the thesis argument are selected and transformed into written transcripts. Following that, the transcripts undergo another process of selection for brevity purposes and are subjected to content analysis to uncover their meanings and implications before I translate them into English. The conceptual tools applied in this analysis are those provided by the literatures on framing and social movements on the one hand, and Searle's model of social reality construction on the other (explained in Chapter 3), whereas references to the literature on intellectuals are made to place this analysis in the wider theoretical framework designed by this thesis.

The research uses *latent content analysis,* as it aims to uncover the underlying meanings of terms used within televised texts (as opposed to *manifest content analysis* that does not go beyond the surface structure of the message).[29] It also presents a form of *inductive reasoning*, as it seeks to interpret the implications of televised articulations and reintroduces them as meaningful abstractions (as opposed to *deductive reasoning* where research starts from theory rather than observations).[30] The research could also be described as *intertextual,* as each of its texts "is always related to some preceding or simultaneous discourse"[31]. In this case, intertextuality is a result of the connection between a diverse set of televised texts that vary from imagery to verbal articulations and written material. It is worth noting that the term *text* in this research is used in its broader sense, as it stretches beyond conventional references to written material and covers all "meaningful matter" including technology supported social interactions.[32]

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[29] Hsiu-Fanf Hsieh and Sarah Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* 15 (2005): 1283-1284.

[30] Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* (London: Sage Publications, 2003), 35-37.

[31] Laura Alba-Juez, *Perspectives on Discourse Analysis: Theory and Practice* (London: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2009), 7.

[32] Krippendorff, *Content Analysis,* 19.

Subjecting the interviews on television to latent content analysis requires shedding light on the thematic uses of language by the channel's guest intellectuals. For that, the concept of *framing* is used as a theoretical construct to explain the processes of narrative construction and deconstruction. In this context, emphasis is put on the intellectuals' deployment of descriptive terms, figures of speech (especially religious), recurrent phrases, analytic constructs, and generalizing abstractions. The term *narrative* is used here to denote the textual "sequence and consequence"; i.e. the "events (that) are selected, organized, connected, and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience".[33] It is important to note, however, that the term is also characterized by "perspective and context",[34] as it relates to the standpoint of the narrator and is affected by exogenous factors present within the medium in which the narrator operates. In this research, these factors pertain to al-Jazeera as a medium with specific editorial policies by which the intellectual abides, and to Qatar as a partisan state with certain regional policies to which al-Jazeera adheres. Yet neither of these factors (al-Jazeera's editorial line and Qatar's regional policies) fall within the scope of our study.

In its content analysis, the research also applies Searle's model of social constructivism to address the process of regime delegitimation and the promotion of alternative political possibilities. Accordingly, the themes underscored in this regard are those pertaining to the propagation of new *institutional facts* with redefined *status-functions* and to the efforts of modifying *collective intentionality* in order to serve this propagation. This is a form of discourse analysis that is identified with a "social dimension" whereby it "gets recruited on site to enact specific activities and social identities".[35] The "activities" that this research chooses to inspect are those falling within the platform having al-Jazeera on one end, and regimes and their systems of representation on the other.

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[33] Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis (Qualitative Research Methods)* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993), 1.

[34] Charles P. Smith, "Content Analysis and Narrative Analysis" in *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 328.

[35] Alba-Juez, *Perspectives on Discourse Analysis,* 16.

Primary sources also include interviews that were conducted with several al-Jazeera employees: a senior presenter who contributed on condition of anonymity, former al-Jazeera senior producer Osama Radi, former al-Jazeera reporter in Libya Ali Hashem, and former al-Jazeera reporter in Egypt Dina Samak. The research also involves an interview with Mahmoud Shammm, one of al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals under study, a senior journalist having former ties with the Qatari ruling family and who spoke on condition of anonymity, in addition to personal observations and interviews that had previously been done with Libyan opposition figures during a field visit to Libya in the first few weeks of the uprising.

As for secondary sources, the research engages with diverse bodies of literature, as it highlights the relationship between media and politics in general and in the Arab World in particular, the sociology of intellectuals, framing and social movements, Searle's model for social constructivism, various academic and journalistic works on Egypt and Libya, in addition to other scholarly contributions that relate to one or more of the aforementioned. Thus, it involves a selection of academic works that enrich its interdisciplinary nature. On the other hand, gathering empirical material through secondary sources is obtained by referring to newspaper archives. This reference allows to recreate the context in which the uprisings evolved and al-Jazeera operated, and to draw a clear pattern of meaningful occurrences and a coherent succession of events. Since the thesis limits its study to the 18 days of the uprising in Egypt and to the first 33 days of the one in Libya, the daily happenings within those two timeframes are revisited in two Arabic newspapers with different editorial policies (to ensure the obtainment of objective facts); the Saudi *al-Sharq al-Awsat* and the Lebanese *al-Safir*. This selection of two newspapers that have opposing editorial lines for the extraction of empirical data serves as a means for fact checking, since comparing between their coverage allows us to diversify our sources and thus to ensure the obtainment of objective facts and reliable news material.

Case Selection

This research presents two case studies to demonstrate its argument. It begins with exploring al-Jazeera's engagement with the Egyptian uprising before examining the channel's coverage of the uprising in Libya. As earlier mentioned, each case represents a different context with distinct characteristic features and intervening variables. This is why al-Jazeera's contribution to both discourses has accordingly differed in terms of nature and extent. The main differences stem from the regimes' ideologies and structures. The variations in this regard, as shall later be explained, have impacted the authorities' responses to protests in both countries, the nature and degree of foreign intervention, as well as al-Jazeera's engagement with the popular discourse.

The intellectuals whose role is examined in this research are those who have been regularly hosted on al-Jazeera to comment on its broadcast output (news and imagery). Azmi Bishara was the main figure performing this task followed by Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi. The former is a prominent Palestinian academic and politician, a founder of a major Arab political party in Israel, and a former member of the Israeli Knesset. Prior to 2007, Bishara was thought to be the leading figure in one of the "two schools of thought [that] were dominant among Arab intellectuals in Israel", as he "embarked on a new political path" by founding "The Covenant of Equality".[36] Through the latter, he advocated the principles of citizenship and egalitarianism amongst Jews and Palestinians in a binational state,[37] and, to many, his political activism and intellectual output made him "undisputedly the most influential and fruitful political and cultural thinker in the Arab-Palestinian community in Israel in the last several decades".[38] Bishara headed al-Tajammu' al-Watani al-Dimuqrāti (the

[36] Reuven Aharoni and Joseph Ginat, "The Palestinian Citizens of Israel and the Peace Process: The case of an Unbuilt Bridge" in *The Middle East Peace Process: Vision and Reality*, ed. Joseph Ginat et al. (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2002), 114.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Amal Jamal, *Arab Minority Nationalism in Israel: The Politics of Indigeneity*. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 226.

National Democratic Assembly), a party that was represented by a number of parliamentarians in the Knesset and whose main objective was to "halt the marginalization and Israelization of the Arab citizens in the Jewish state".[39] His thoughts "challenged the ideas of all Arab parties active in the Arab community" and "presented a new and systematic challenge to the dominant political thought of Zionist parties".[40] In terms of his ideological background, Bishara is an Arab nationalist of a Marxist background,[41] yet in later scholarly contributions has presented a relatively positive account of some factions representing political Islam. His account was based on two main considerations: the first pertains to the active role of some factions in the Arab-Israeli conflict (the Lebanese Hezbollah being an example in this regard), and the second relates to the adaptation of some Islamist movements to the needs of a democratic system.[42] Bishara is the writer and editor of a variety of scholarly and literary works that mainly address contemporary Arab issues of identity and politics.[43] Hosted by Qatar since 2007 after Israeli authorities threatened to sue him for his support of Hezbollah in the 2006 war on Lebanon, he was regarded as al-Jazeera's main secular intellectual commenting on the uprisings. From 2010 onwards, Bishara founded and headed several multi-million dollar projects financed by Qatar including the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies based in Doha,[44] al-Araby al-Jadeed

[39] Azmi Bishara, Sara Scalenghe, Steve Rothman and Joel Beinin, "On Palestinians in the Israeli Knesset: Interview with Azmi Bishara", Middle East Report 201 (1996), 27.

[40] Amal Jamal, *Arab Minority Nationalism in Israel*, 227.

[41] Azmi Bishara, Middle East Report, 27.

[42] Interview with Saker Abu Fakher, author of a book featuring a series of interviews with Azmi Bishara regarding his intellectual and political contributions; a work in progress to be published end of 2016. June 1, 2016.

[43] "Azmi Bishara", accessed: 20 May, 2017 http://azmibishara.com/About-Azmi/Biography.aspx.

[44] Jack Khoury, "Former MK Azmi Bishara Wants to Return to Israel but Fears Unfair Trial", *Haaretz*, May 10, 2015.

newspaper and al-Araby TV (both based in London).[45] The amount of support that Bishara received from Qatar during the "Arab Spring" mirrored his close ties with the monarchy's ruling family. Little wonder, then, was he regarded as "the [Qatari] Emir's closest adviser".[46]

Al-Jazeera's other main intellectual who was hosted on a regular basis, Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, was a Sunni cleric of Egyptian origins and Qatari nationality. Al-Qaradawi, widely viewed as the spiritual leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Arab World, was able to complement Bishara's insightful interpretations with religious incentives and provocative oratory that was founded on Islamic grounds. The influential cleric was thought to be "by far the most prominent scholar and preacher in Sunni Islam at the beginning of the twenty-first century".[47] His contributions played a role in shaping contemporary Islamism,[48] and his works as an `ālim (religious scholar) date back to 1960 when he published his first and most successful book "Lawful and Prohibited in Islam" (al-ḥalāl wa 'l-ḥarām fī'l-islām) which introduced him as a descendant of a "reformist" Islamic doctrine that emerged in the early twentieth century.[49] Following the persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in the mid 1960s, al-Qaradawi moved to Qatar, and in the succeeding years, he gradually became recognized as an "international `ālim"[50] and an "authoritative reference" (Marji'iyya) "whose interpretations and opinions in various fields shaped the beliefs

[45] Feras Kilnai, "Qatar's Al-Araby Al-Jadeed: Will New Media Venture Silence Suspicions?", *BBC Arabic*, November 28, 2014.

[46] Lina Khatib, "Qatar and the Recalibration of Power in the Gulf", Carnegie Middle East Center, September 11, 2014.

[47] Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (ed.) *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 224.

[48] Ibid, 224.

[49] Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen & Bettina Graf, ed., in *Global Mufti: The Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi*, (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2009), 4.

[50] Skovgaard-Petersen, "Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī and al-Azhar" in *Global Mufti*, 36.

and convictions of a large number of believers".[51] His influence, however, was considerably enhanced following his weekly appearance on al-Jazeera's show "Sharia and Life" (al-Sharī'a wa'l-Hayāt) starting 1996, as the programme elevated his stature to world prominence.[52] Albeit his TV contributions date back to 1970 when he hosted his own show on Qatar's national television, "Sharia and Life" introduced a lively and dynamic platform through which he had the chance to address tens of millions of viewers around the Arab World. Accordingly, al-Qaradawi's "alliance" with al-Jazeera allowed him to "construct a Muslim public", and his shift from the Qatari national television to al-Jazeera gave him a new role: "from primarily being an educator and informer, al-Qaradawi became an agenda setter".[53]

The Libyan case introduced other intellectuals to the list of regular commentators on al-Jazeera. This was mainly due to the intrusion of new variables distinguishing Libya's uprising from the preceding ones in Tunisia and Egypt. These variables, mainly relating to the militarization of the uprising and the use of brute force by Libyan authorities, presupposed the need for additional efforts and further specialization in Libyan affairs to create a compelling narrative. Thus, three "local" intellectuals (as opposed to the two aforementioned transnational ones) took part in constructing al-Jazeera's narrative regarding the Libyan discourse. Two of them, Mahmoud Shammam and Sleiman Dogha, were political activists directly involved in the conflict, as they were members of the National Transitional Council (NTC) that seized power in Libya after the downfall of Gaddafi's regime, whereas the third, Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi, was a Sunni cleric expelled from his homeland and hosted by Doha since the 1990s.

Outline of dissertation

The chapters to follow elucidate how the process of social reality deconstruction was attained through al-Jazeera by involving intellectuals. In the course of explication,

[51] Motaz al-Khatib, "Yūsuf al- Qaradāwī as an authoritative reference", in *Global Mufti*, p. 86.

[52] Skovgaard-Petersen, "Yūsuf al- Qaradāwī and al-Azhar" in *Global Mufti*, 50.

[53] Ehab Galal, "Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī and the new Islamic TV" in *Global Mufti*, 149.

various conceptual tools are deployed and empirical data are analyzed. Chapter 2 presents a literature review regarding the correlation between politics and media in general and the Arab World in particular, before highlighting the evolution of al-Jazeera, its role in reconstructing the Arab public sphere, and the partisan relationship joining the network to its sponsoring state, Qatar. Chapter 3 underscores several conceptual accounts of intellectuals and framing processes, then constructs a theoretical framework derived from three different bodies of literature. The framework connects intellectuals (as generators of meaningful articulations) to collective action frames (as mechanisms of meaning construction), and deploys Searle's sociolinguistic model to explain the shift from linguistic practices to social reality construction. Chapter 4 presents the case of Egypt and analyzes the various framing processes that al-Jazeera's intellectuals engaged with to delegitimize Mubarak's regime and other relevant institutional facts. Chapter 5 introduces the second case study, Libya, and explains how the characteristic features of its regime and its aggressive response to threat resulted in the deployment of different tools by the network and its intellectuals in their battle against Gaddafi and eventually lead to the deconstruction of the state's institutions as a whole. Finally, chapter 6 presents a brief comparison between the two case studies and their outcomes, before highlighting the findings of the research as well as its shortcomings and limitations. Following this introduction, the next chapter provides a thorough review of the literature and helps allocate the gaps that this research aims to fill.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Ever since its advent in 1996, the Qatari channel al-Jazeera has been reconfiguring background assumptions of Arab audiences. The network has played a pivotal role in reconstructing the Arab public sphere, as it challenged existing taboos and redefined the landscapes of political debate. Banking on its provocative rhetoric that was passed on to tens of millions of Arab spectators, al-Jazeera emerged as an unorthodox Arab medium, critical of regimes and conventional political restraints. The network's dynamic engagement with controversial issues and events introduced a platform for a vibrant media discourse, and served as a "de facto Pan-Arab opposition and a forum for resistance".[54] Its maverick output was a groundbreaking contribution to an evolving Arab mediascape and a promoter of alternative political representations in the Arab World.

This chapter engages with key conceptual accounts of media and representation, as well as with the main literature on al-Jazeera and news media in general (on the international stage and in the Arab World). It opens by examining the interplay between media and politics, and by highlighting the reciprocal impact in this interchange as several historical junctures suggest. The chapter then surveys the evolving mediascape in the Arab World prior to the outburst of the Arab uprisings before tracing al-Jazeera's pioneering experience in this regard. It then unpacks the role of the network in reconstructing the Arab public sphere, as it reconfigured the discursive patterns of debate and contested long-sustained political establishments in the Arab World. The chapter concludes by highlighting the partisan relationship between al-Jazeera and its sponsoring state, Qatar, thus placing the channel's output in the context of regional

[54] Zayani, *The Al Jazeera Phenomenon*, 18.

politics. In the course of these examinations, the chapter discusses the absence of theoretical and empirical contributions underlining the role of intellectuals in amplifying media impact on political discourse and in altering social realities. Accordingly, it provides an all-inclusive review of the literature, as a means to identify the gaps that this thesis aims to fill.

Revisiting the pubic sphere

As earlier explained, the term *public sphere* was introduced by Habermas to denote a space for communicative discussion amongst citizens regarding issues of shared concern. In democratic societies, these discussions are capable of impacting state policy formation, as they help formulate a pressure on policy makers when the latter's decisions contradict with powerful public trends. This research shows how the media's role during the Arab uprisings involved the public sphere as a virtual field of communication where public dissent was verbalized regarding Arab regimes. Due to the lack of democratic institutions that allow for transforming this dissent into political pressure, its material manifestations took the form of popular uprisings.

Habermas has expressed his skepticism regarding the role that media play in shaping the public sphere. To Habermas, the ideal form of a public sphere is that which is unaffected by exogenous pressures that limit the scope of public interaction.[55] This is not the case in today's world, as the infiltration of mass media by interest groups often leads to manipulating the public, thus deforming the evolution of the sphere itself.[56] Some scholars proposed to further dissect the term by distinguishing between various kinds of publics. Schulz, for example, differentiates between *interactive publics* (in the sense initially proposed by Habermas before the sphere's reconstruction in Europe, i.e. where individual social actors communicate through direct interface) and *media publics*

[55] Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society,* trans. Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 176.

[56] Winfried Schulz, "Changes of Mass Media and the Public Sphere", *Javnost – The Public* 4 (1997), 58.

(where the interaction occurs through media platforms).[57] Today, Habermas and his descendants and critics alike accent that media publics have become predominant over interactive publics due to the vast information technology revolution. In fact, since media have become the primary sources of information, even interactive publics have become reliant on them, since they provide them with necessary means to substantiate the debating viewpoints they entail.[58]

The public sphere we refer to in this research is that which is necessarily linked to media output and the resulting discourse between participant individuals, or that involving a *media public*. Hence we rely on the definitions accentuating not only the centrality of the public, but also of the media as an element giving the term its full meaning. Today's public sphere has developed to involve a participatory process between media outlets and their spectators. Our research addresses this participatory process, as it constitutes a prerequisite for shaping mass perceptions regarding inflammatory events on different Arab stages. In the course of doing so, however, the research emphasizes the role of intellectuals in amplifying certain frames that have served in revolutionizing the Arab public sphere. It explains how the Arab media public was not only involved in a dynamic interchange of ideas via media platforms, but was also receptive of mediated intellectual articulations that contributed to deconstructing the public's social context itself.

Reality and its parallel world

In his understanding of hyperreality, Baudrillard does not deny the presence of a material world.[59] Instead, he presents the concept of *vital illusion* through which he explains the logic of coexistence between reality and illusion, the latter being part of the former. Baudrillard defines the Real as "an origin, an end, a past and a future, a chain of

[57] Ibid, 60.

[58] Ibid, 60.

[59] Steven Cole, "Baudrillard's Ontology: Empirical Research and the Denial of the Real", *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies*, 7 (2010), accessed March 3, 2013. http://www.ubishops.ca/baudrillardstudies/vol-7_2/v7-2-cole.html.

causes and effects, continuity and rationality". He contends that there is "no Real without these elements, without an objective configuration of discourse. And its disappearing is the dislocation of this whole constellation".[60] Having defined his conception of the Real, as a rational discourse enclosing cause and effect, he moves on to present his assumption regarding the illusion created by the media through various degrees of intensification, distortions and repetitions – all constituting a disruption of the aforementioned constellation. This illusion, according to Baudrillard, becomes an intrinsic part of reality itself. It is true that broadcast images are not "there" (in the real world) in the same way they appear to an audience, but just by reaching this audience, they constitute a hyper form of reality coexisting with the latter and impacting it at the same time.

The idea of having a hyperreality and a vital illusion is of epistemic significance. It relates to constructed perceptions and conceptions through the power of image representation. Baudrillard thought of it as being analogous to the illusion of a star's existence: due to the colossal distance separating the star from planet Earth, its light could still be perceived by the human eye even though it might have actually ceased to exist. Baudrillard uses this example to explain the instability of objects in the "real world", hence denying the presence of objective encounters of actual events. He argues, however, that this illusion created in this regard is *vital* because it represents a primary source of knowledge, albeit imprecise in its implications. The media's establishment of vital illusions is important in this sense. These illusions are essential for our knowledge of "the world out there", yet are not reflective of it as it is. Rather, the media's image representations are constitutive of a parallel world (hyperreality) and are illuminators of the world being represented (through vital illusions), both at the same time.

The account abovementioned could be projected on the discourse involving al-Jazeera and the Arab public sphere during the uprisings. In a similar way, despite the distortions it comprised, the hyperreality that the channel's representations constructed

[60] Jean Baudrillard, *The Vital Illusion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 63.

(regarding the uprisings) was vital for shedding light on reality itself. Nevertheless, the notion of hyperreality discussed here does not suffice to explain the process of reality construction that this thesis engages with, as it primarily pertains to imagery rather than intellectual content. And although image production has the ability to shape mass perceptions and accounts of reality, it is incapable of playing the role that intellectuals could, precisely with regard to strategizing, guiding action, and imagining alternative political possibilities.

The same could be said about McLuhan's understanding of media effect on collective cognition. Highlighting the media's role as an environment that shapes its occupants was an interesting contribution that nevertheless lacked any reference to the intellectual component we discuss here. John Culkins, further discussing McLuhan's ideas, once emphasized the media's reciprocal nature: "we shape our tools and thereafter they shape us".[61] The idea was that communication is necessarily transformative of the interlocutors it comprises. Its dialogical character allows for mutual impact to occur between the actors it involves. During the uprisings, those interlocutors were political activists shaping the discourse in public space. They were highly interactive with their media environment, impacting its output and subject to its effects at the same time. The element of intellectual participation, however, helped them make sense of events and therefore shape this interchange accordingly. This element was neither addressed in McLuhan's contributions nor in Baudrillard's later on.

Examining media effect on Arab discourse starts from establishing a well-rounded view of the relationship between broadcast images and the real world. In this regard, constructed realities reconfigure actual ones, thus founding a base for popular incitement and mass mobilization. Thereafter, as we later examine, different forms of framing contribute to shaping public discourse, as in the case of al-Jazeera's engagement with the popular uprisings through its guest intellectuals. However, this thesis, albeit acknowledging that media coverage of events results in constructing a form of

[61] John Culkin, "Each culture develops its own sense ratio to meet the demands of its environment," in *McLuhan: Hot and cool,* ed. Gerald Stearn (New York: Dial Press, 1967), 52.

hyperreality, does not presume the subordination of content to form as both Baudrillard and McLuhan hypothesize. The hyperreality we refer to here is that which is reconstructive of reality. It is that pertaining to representation versus the represented rather than to form versus content, because the existence of an intellectual aspect provides al-Jazeera's representations with content and meaning. We shall highlight that in the next chapter as we discuss the intellectual constituent in the network's coverage basing on Searle's understanding of social constructivism.

Media and politics: a mutual impact

It is often argued that the nature of news coverage can effectively draw the limits of the audiences' involvement with reported events, as it either creates a sense of concern or one of passivity.[62] In other words, constructed depictions of reality play a major role in shaping the audiences' interaction with this reality, thus influencing the trajectory of actual events. It should be born in mind that the notions of objectivity and neutrality are relative in the field of media, and this renders news industry porous to subjective drives and various forms of agenda setting. In this regard, Sakr quotes Peter Golding who "argued in the 1970s that, since all media institutions are wedded to social and political processes, the Western professional ideal of impartiality in communication was probably unattainable".[63] Media depictions of social realities are thus constructed through sophisticated forms of broadcast imagery and storytelling, and, as Philip Taylor contends, "media perception is not necessarily a picture of the world as it is, but a flawed construct created by the distortion, compression, and manipulation".[64] In this respect, personal experiences also intervene in creating inaccurate depictions of reality, and individual perceptions often distort objective encounters of events. Moreover, media practitioners have a tendency to be absorbed by micro narratives, sometimes on the expense of macro ones. In Taylor's words, "because journalists are neither sociologists

[62] Peter Dahlgren, "Enhancing the Civic Ideal in Television Journalism", in *The Media in Question*, ed. K. Brants et al. (London: Sage, 1997), 95.

[63] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 118.

[64] Taylor, *Global Communications,* 13.

nor historians, their concern is more with the detail rather than the overall picture".[65] Media output is therefore a result of this entwined process of individually and institutionally constructed accounts of reality.

The interplay between media and politics, however, generates an impact in both directions. On the one hand, news media usually deploy politicized rhetoric in their coverage, and journalists often interfere in shaping news content through various degrees of direct or indirect bias and manipulation as discussed above. The result of that could be understood in terms of the media's representational power earlier explained. On the other hand, the impact of politics on media is often sensed in terms of restrictions placed on the media's sphere of action, whether regarding their ability to freely express and communicate political ideas and stances, or concerning the technical and logistic challenges imposed on them in times of war. These restrictions take different forms. On various occasions, for example, journalists were victims of conflicts and war correspondents were treated as combatants rather than civilians.[66] NATO's deliberate bombing of Radio Television Serbia (RTS) during the 1999 war on Yugoslavia serves as a good example in this regard. The attack was justified on the premise that the network was acting as a propagandist mouthpiece for Belgrade's regime.[67] Later, other media crews were persecuted in times of war, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq, after the US lead "War on Terror" was launched in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. The Qatari channel al-Jazeera was the most targeted in both conflicts. The same could be said regarding the channel during the uprisings of Egypt and Libya as shall be shown in the chapters to follow.

At different junctures, concerns were raised regarding the weaponization of the media and its impact on both, the media's ability to sustain a level of objectivity on the one hand, and to gather and disseminate news content, precisely in combat zones, on the

[65] Taylor, *War and the Media*, 12.

[66] Naomi Sakr, *Arab Television Today* (London: IB Tauris, 2007), 83.

[67] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 204.

other.[68] By the dawn of the new millennium and the rise of transnational jihadist insurgency following the 2001 attacks in Washington D.C. and New York, new controversies arouse in light of contemporary political and security challenges. It was argued that journalistic norms were shaken after the 9/11 attacks due to subjective encounters of the event in Western media.[69] Controversial issues relating to speed versus accuracy in news coverage were raised in academic and professional debates alike, whereas deployment of emotions on the screen was commonly disputed.[70] In this regard, it was widely believed that market competition played a substantial role in outlining editorial policies and sensationalizing news coverage, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq. Accordingly, "just as CNN tailored the domestic version of its broadcast to be more "patriotic" in response to its losing market share to Fox News, Arab satellite television stations increasingly took market pressures into account" as well.[71]

Controversies relating to the weaponization of media outlets were strictly relevant to their conventional forms of coverage, however. The role of mediated intellectuals in the process of framing deliberations and creating meaning was neither addressed in debates on Arab nor on international media. The weaponization of al-Jazeera as understood by this thesis, on the other hand, was resultant from a different form of engagement with political discourse; one that capitalized on intellectual output to delegitimize the rationale of ruling elites and guide anti-regime action. The lack of this missing ingredient could be especially noticed in the following subtopic, as we go beyond the general accounts on media and politics, and shed light on the evolution of news media in the Arab World and the correlation between these media and political developments on domestic and regional arenas.

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[68] Philip Seib, *The Al Jazeera Effect: How the New Global Media are Reshaping World Politics* (Washington: Potomac Books, 2008),183-184.

[69]Annabelle Sreberny, "Trauma Talk: Reconfiguring the Inside and Outside," in *Journalism after September 11*, ed. Barabie Zelizer and Stewart Allan (New York: Routledge, 2003), 221.

[70] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 52.

[71] Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public*, 192.

News media in the Arab World

Arab satellite broadcasting emerged in 1990, after the Egyptian satellite channel began transmission. A second attempt shortly followed, when Saudi Arabia launched MBC (Middle East Broadcasting Center) in 1991. The channel that broadcast from London was regarded as a pioneering venture in the Arab media world in terms of technology and content. In addition to its high quality production compared to other Arab outlets, MBC covered Pan Arab issues pertaining to politics, society, entertainment, and sports. After MBC, two networks owned by Saudi entrepreneurs were launched from Italy. ART (Arabic Radio and Television - 1993) and Orbit (1994) represented similar projects, as they encompassed various aspects of life.[72] This "offshore democracy", as termed by former Jordanian Minister of Information Nasser Judeh, created the first partial breach of traditional media monopoly and announced a gradual proliferation of satellite channels and an increasing fragmentation of the Arab audience.[73]

By the end of 1996, Qatar launched al-Jazeera, the first twenty-four hour dedicated news service in the Arab World. The network, broadcasting from Doha, made use of the former staff of BBC Arabic, which had marked an unsuccessful joint venture between BBC and Saudi owned Orbit. The British Arabic speaking network did not even have the chance to reach a full day broadcasting schedule. It lasted less than eighteen months before it stopped broadcasting after KSA pulled out from the project in reaction to airing a documentary that shed light on human rights violations in the Kingdom. Al-Jazeera employed BBC's well-trained staff and introduced a new trend in Arab media; one that aimed to reproduce the British corporation's open and interactive style with the audience.[74]

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[72] Khalil Rinnawi, *Instant Nationalism: McArabism, Aljazeera, and Transnational Media in the Arab World* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2006), 36-37.

[73] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 1-4.

[74] Barbie Zelizer and Stuart Allan, *Reporting War: Journalism in Wartime,* (London: Routledge, 2004), 318.

In the following years, Arab satellite stations rapidly increased in number. The most serious attempt was the launching of Saudi funded and sponsored al-Arabiya. The latter was established in 2003 to counterbalance al-Jazeera's effect on Arab masses, and to protect KSA from attacks in the media, precisely those launched on al-Jazeera's platform. Al-Arabiya officials promised "a wise and balanced alternative to al-Jazeera" that would refrain from what they described as a "deliberate provocation on al-Jazeera's part".[75] Thereafter, hundreds of other Arabic speaking channels mushroomed, yet few were news oriented. The main news networks were extensions of regional or international powers aiming to promulgate their respective state policies. Among those were the Iranian al-Alam (2003), the American al-Hurra (2004), Moscow's Russia Today (2006), London's relaunched BBC Arabic (2008), Paris's France 24 (2010), Ankara's TRT (2010), the outlet mirroring the alliance between Iran and Syria, al-Mayadeen (2012) and the Arabic version of Sky News hosted by Abu Dhabi (2012).

Before examining the media's effect on the Arab public sphere, precisely al-Jazeera's, we shall briefly highlight their impact on interstate as well as intrastate affairs in contemporary times. The impact of Arab media on Pan Arab and domestic arenas was partially a result of its overlap with international media trends on the one hand, and partly stemming from distinctive features characterizing the Arab mediascape on the other, as many contributions to the literature reveal.

On the level of interstate relations, the accelerating process of globalization has vastly undermined state sovereignty and the giant leaps achieved in cross border communication have created new venues for media platforms. This increase in state permeability was a global phenomenon and the Arab World marked no exception in this regard. With time, *deterritorialization* signifying the departure between territory and culture gained *de facto* recognition by the state, thus allowing the media to invest in a widening communicative space. [76] In the Arab World, this investment was achieved by

[75] Sakr, *Arab Television Today,* 158.

[76] Rinnawi, *Instant Nationalism,* 148.

fusing the local information marketplace into a broader regional one. The fusion of information markets expanded the platform of commonalities and highlighted shared interests between Arab audiences regarding political affairs. Satellite media were thus thought to be radically transforming "the sense of distance among Arabs and Muslims, bringing them together in real time and in a common language alongside intense images and a shared political discourse".[77] Al-Jazeera operated within this regional market and invested in this deterritorialization during the Arab uprisings. Its intellectuals, especially Azmi Bishara and Sheikh Youssef al-Qardawai, enjoyed wide access to a transnational Arab audience via the network's platform. The linguistic and cultural ties binding Arab communities helped maximize their impact on the Arab political discourse. This intellectual element that the thesis addresses had not been discussed in previous accounts regarding the issue in hand.

The media's intrastate effect, on the other hand, was hardly noticed in the Arab World despite its significance in Western mediascapes (the *CNN effect* being an example of that). In the West, the political decision making process is the product of a complex web of interactions between state bureaucracy, multi-national corporations, media institutions, interest groups, and individuals.[78] This entwined model more or less illustrates the modern state apparatus and explicates state behavior in liberal democracies, and media conglomerates are part of the interactive process that this model entails. In the Arab World, however, the media's intrastate effect was not governed by the same dynamics. This is because Arab news media had several characteristics distinguishing them from their Western counterparts. These distinguishing features - underscored by several scholarly contributions and listed below - have restrained the media's aptitude to counter local power structures in the Arab World:

First, profit making criteria and the public/private dichotomy did not hold the same significance as they did in Western countries, and states rather than market forces

[77] Lynch, *Voices of the Arab Public*, 41.

[78] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 27-28, 68.

were the main players in this field.[79] In this regard, Sakr contends that television licensing was instrumentally used to expand the power base of ruling elites, "by accommodating milder critics while pushing harsher ones beyond the margins of power and influence".[80] The proliferation of satellite networks, albeit creating a more pluralistic media platform, did not solve the problem of political constraints traditionally exercised on terrestrial outlets. On the contrary, Skar argues that, "by opening safety valves for the expression of dissent that national media controls kept closed, transnational television could even be said to have weakened the build-up of pressure for the removal of bans on private terrestrial television ownership".[81]

Second, and in consequence to the aforementioned, news media rhetoric was generally government-controlled. Mellor contends that Arab authorities "sought to use the media as a means for mobilizing Arab public opinion" and that "journalists were regarded as new mouthpieces of Arab regimes".[82] Monopolizing news content, direct censorship, and various forms of repressive measures (on satellite as well as terrestrial networks) largely defined the Arab mediascape. Albeit grounded on "ethical" allegations, these measures veiled a "sense of duty to state authorities".[83] Ethics codification was thus closely associated to power structures,[84] and the term professionalism denoted "a code word for political compliance".[85] In this context, and apart from very few exceptions, maintaining tight control over state media meant that

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[79] Mamoun Fandy, *(UN)Civil War of Words: Media and Politics in the Arab World* (London: Praeger, 2007) 5 – 8.

[80] Sakr, *Arab Television Today,* 46, 47.

[81] Ibid 15.

[82] Noha Mellor, "Arab Media: An Overview of Recent Trends," in *Arab Media: Globalization and Emerging Media Industries*, ed. Noha Mellor et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 12.

[83] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 124.

[84] Kai Hafez, "Journalism Ethics Revisited: A Comparison of Ethics Codes in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and the Mulsim Asia," in *Media Ethics in the Dialogue of Cultures*, ed. Kai Hafez (Hamburg: Deutsches Orient-Institut, 2003), 61.

[85] Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public*, 63.

employees had to be trained by government-run institutions.[86] Although challenged by an "investigative" form of journalism, mainly represented by Qatar's al-Jazeera, this conventional viewpoint was dominant in the Arab World and has hampered attempts to deploy journalism for cultivating a culture of accountability and expanding the platforms of political debate.

Third, a process of *indigenization* was noticed in Arab satellite realms, whereby Western talkshows were replicated and reinvented locally. Notwithstanding, non-conventional practices were adapted and put in line with the editorial policies and priorities of Arab satellite networks. This form of *hybridization* was restrictive of critical engagements with intrastate affairs, as most Arab networks avoided raising sensitive issues that Western political talkshows addressed and settled for a mere reproduction of their formats.[87] Accenting form rather than content was thus another distinguishing feature often detected in Arab news media.

These shortcomings that distinguish the Arab mediascape from its Western counterpart explain why news media in the Arab World had little impact on state policies. Major governmental decisions were not subject to change in reaction to media criticism and scrutiny in Arab states. On the contrary, private media institutes often reconfigured their editorial policies in accordance with the interests and preferences of ruling elites. The infiltration of Western ideals noticed on Arab media platforms was of a rather technical nature, and little did it revolutionize the Arab media output in terms of content. Al-Jazeera was an exception in this regard. Yet even this exception was thought to be limited to an Arab regional context, as the Qatari channel did not highlight its partisan state's controversial domestic affairs. Moreover, no matter how critical al-Jazeera was of different Arab regimes, it was widely thought to be disadvantaged by their control of national media outlets, as the latter enjoyed more accessibility to domestic audiences whose priorities were local rather than Pan Arab. Our thesis,

[86] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 130.

[87] Ibid, 86 – 88.

however, demonstrates how this gap was partially bridged by al-Jazeera's intellectual articulations, precisely in the case of Libya - where national intellectuals complemented their transnational counterparts in creating collective action frames that specifically addressed the priorities of Libyan spectators.

Despite the aforementioned deficiencies, some scholars believed that the Arab mediascape was developing in ways that elevate its role in shaping public discourse. In this regard, Seib argued that news media in the Arab World "can help to galvanize activism and construct an intellectual framework that gives coherence to reform efforts".[88] This optimism was based on the assumption that open venues for debate nourish discursive practices and expand the parameters of popular engagement with social and political affairs. Thereafter, political reform becomes an issue of public concern, and alternative approaches to political problems could be proposed. The intellectual aspect that al-Jazeera's output conveyed during the Arab uprisings and shall be underscored in later chapters was of a revolutionary nature, however, as it constituted a central element in the channel's efforts to reinforce anti-regime discourse and mobilize protesting masses. Contrary to that, Seib's account of this factor was more of a traditional one, as it accentuated the role of intellectual output in boosting reform efforts on the long run, and not in reconstructing social realities in revolutionary contexts.

In the following, we shall briefly exhibit al-Jazeera's advent and evolution throughout the 15 years preceding the outburst of the Arab uprisings. Shedding light on the network's evolutionary pattern helps comprehend the various stages it had passed through and the experience it had accumulated before reaching its peak in 2011. It is also important to show that, despite the powerful discourse that al-Jazeera has managed to create during the course of its evolution, the intellectual ingredient that was later exhibited throughout the uprisings was minimal at times and inefficient at others. Contrary to that, the eruption of upheavals and the subsequent crystallization of dissident social movements provided the network with the fertile grounds it needed to absorb its

[88] Sieb, *The Al Jazeera Effect,* 142.

intellectual output. After examining al-Jazeera's evolutionary pattern in the following, we highlight its immense impact on the Arab public sphere and its instrumental deployment in the context of regional politics as discussed in several scholarly contributions.

Al-Jazeera's evolution

Al-Jazeera rose from the ashes of BBC's Arabic service end of 1996. Its provocative rhetoric magnetized popular as well as official curiosity in a short span of time. The channel's first tangible effect was sensed during its coverage of Operation Desert Fox in 1998 and the following protests in various Arab countries against American and British air strikes targeting Iraq.[89]

In parallel to its seemingly anti-American rhetoric, the Qatari network introduced a critical voice of Arab regimes. It was therefore banned on several occasions in different Arab states. One of the most well-known and early bans was imposed by Jordanian authorities in 1998 after harsh criticism of the Kingdom's regime and its regional policies was voiced on its prominent show *al-Ittijah al-Mu'akis* (The Opposite Direction - a replica of CNN's *Crossfire*).[90] Prior to that, Doha received official complaints from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait regarding al-Jazeera, following an episode of *al-Sharia'a Wal Hayat* (Religion and Life - a show regularly hosting Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi), in which a caller attacked the Emir of Kuwait on air. Consequently, the network's correspondent was prohibited from reporting in Kuwait and his credentials were revoked.

On later occasions, further pressures were exercised on the channel and its partisan state Qatar, due to the former's style of coverage and editorial language. The Palestinian authority blamed the channel for tarnishing its image because of an interview with the leader of Hamas, Libya withdrew its ambassador from Doha after a Libyan

[89] Hugh Miles, *Al Jazeera: The Inside Story of the Arab News Channel that is Challenging the West* (New York: Grove Press, 2005), 52.

[90] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 120.

dissident described Gaddafi as a dictator on one of the network's shows, Tunisia downgraded diplomatic relations with Doha after Islamic opposition figures criticized the country's human rights record, Morocco recalled its ambassador from Qatar and accused al-Jazeera of leading a campaign against its "democratic evolution" and a diplomatic crisis almost broke out with neighboring Bahrain after the channel hosted a Bahraini opposition figure. Concomitantly, many Arab state officials favored boycotting the channel over participating in its on air debates with political dissidents.[91] Of those were Egyptian and Algerian officials, who regularly declined from appearing with "Islamic extremists" on the network's talk shows.[92]

Arab authorities used various methods to ensure the interception of al-Jazeera's programs. Not only did they harass the network and persecute its staff, nor did they just threaten to cut diplomatic ties with Doha, but some also deployed unconventional means to guarantee this interception. In January 1999, for example, Algerian authorities shut down the electric current supplying the capital and several major cities for ten minutes to prevent Algerians from watching an episode of *al-Ittijah al-Mu'akis*. These procedures proved to be inefficient, however. In an interview with Hugh Miles, former al-Jazeera manager of media relations Jihad Ballout undermined state policies of that sort, deeming attempts to ban the network as "detrimental, more so to the state or government or authority itself than to the media". Media "can always get access", according to Ballout.[93] The influx of information had various means of delivery to Arab audiences, even before the introduction of social media tools years later.

Critics of al-Jazeera accused the channel of a wide array of political charges. As Miles explains, it was claimed to be "pro-Iraqi, pro-Israeli, pro-militant Islamists, an agent of the British and pawn of the Qatari government",[94] all at the same time. The

[91] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 122.

[92] Miles, *Al Jazeera*, 56 – 58.

[93] Ibid, 60.

[94] Ibid, 58.

channel adopted a form of "media normalization", as Israeli officials were invited to appear on its shows. This was thought to be "a *de facto* form of communication between the Arab World and Israel".[95] The network's normalization policy formed a base for the conspiracy theory associating it to an alleged Qatari scheme that aims to gradually weave ties with Israel and create a tolerant Arab environment in this regard.

On the other hand, al-Jazeera was accused of sympathizing with Baghdad's regime because of highlighting the humanitarian consequences of UN sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s. The network was also linked to Islamic extremists, a charge that dated back to its exclusive interview with Osama Bin Laden in 1999, which was then deemed offensive by the main targets of Bin Laden's criticism; Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Before conducting the interview, al-Jazeera's staff was persistently denied access to KSA, but following Bin Laden's exclusive appearance, a *fatwa* was issued by prominent clerics in the kingdom prohibiting Saudis from taking part in any of the channel's programs.[96]

Al-Jazeera's coverage of the second Palestinian *Intifada* that erupted in 2000 marked another milestone in its evolution. The channel's extensive coverage of the event and its sympathetic tone regarding Palestinians gained it wide credence amongst Arab viewers. Its numerous field reporters on Palestinian territory, around the clock coverage, dynamic engagement with the event, advanced technical abilities and provocative editorial line placed it ahead of all other stations. Notwithstanding, the 9/11 attacks and their aftermath were thought to constitute a turning point in the channel's history. During the 2001 war on Afghanistan, launched to oust Taliban from power and chase al-Qaeda's command chain, al-Jazeera had access to various parts of the country, whereas leading international channels were denied this access and were thus compelled to broadcast footage carrying the al-Jazeera's logo. Zayani contends that "the broadcasting of the Bin Laden videotapes and the airing of graphic images made al-Jazeera part of the

[95] Olivier Da Lage, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 58.

[96] Miles, *Al Jazeera*, 53 - 54.

news it covered".[97] This was precisely true after US air strikes hit the network's Kabul office in November of that year, making this incident the first of several others to follow.

Al-Jazeera's monopoly of information in Afghanistan (which was reliant on Taliban's consent) gave it a dominant position with respect to all other regional and international networks. Contracts for sharing footage were signed with the world's most reputable media corporations including CNN and ABC, and Western officials showed high interest and concern to appear on the channel in order to enhance their public opinion campaigns. The first major interview on al-Jazeera that set this trend was that conducted with then British Prime Minister Tony Blair, a month following the September 11 attacks.[98]

The 2003 war on Iraq presented another opportunity for al-Jazeera to elevate its status on the international media scene. Shortly before the war broke out, the network saturated Iraq with reporters, and when American President George W. Bush advised journalists to evacuate Baghdad for safety purposes, the correspondents of all major networks including CNN, ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox News, either left Iraq or were thrown out by Iraqi authorities, leaving the country almost exclusively for al-Jazeera's coverage (in addition to Abu Dhabi channel, sponsored by the United Arab Emirates, that presented an extensive coverage almost equivalent to that of al-Jazeera and was allowed to operate outside the constraints of the Iraqi Ministry of Information)[99]. Al-Jazeera also had correspondents in the White House, the Pentagon and the UN, in addition to reporters embedded in the Coalition's military units. Its coverage was critical and skeptic of the narrative of all state actors engaged in the conflict. However, this skepticism was mainly centered on Washington's allegations promoting military action against Iraq (mainly the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and connections joining the Iraqi regime to al-Qaeda). Its general stance was also critical of the overall

[97] Zayani, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 21.

[98] Miles, *Al Jazeera*, 138-175.

[99] Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public*, 190.

American policy in the Middle East, precisely that relating to the Iraqi event. Acknowledging its influence, several key figures from the Bush administration gave extensive interviews to the network. Among those were Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. Al-Jazeera was keen on capturing the scene through a wide-angle lens and to present a pervasive overview of the war. Yet the network generally adhered to the political partialities and preferences of its Arab audience. The channel's coverage of the war was intense and captivating, as it aired around the clock images of Baghdad under fire, and frequently left the footage running without commentary, leaving room for its spectators to figure out the images' symbolism.[100] The war on Iraq was burning the country to ashes, and al-Jazeera's coverage aimed to highlight this as an underlying message.

Towards the end of the war on Iraq, al-Jazeera lost one of its staff members, Tarek Ayyoub, after an American missile hit his room of residence in Baghdad's Palestine Hotel. The Americans announced that the incident was an unfortunate mistake. Al-Jazeera's staff faced further difficulties and harassments in the months to follow. After the war ended and coalition troops settled in Iraq, al-Jazeera's office in Baghdad addressed Paul Bremer (head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq) complaining of maltreatment, death threats, confiscation of material and numerous arrests of members in its reporting team. In September of that year, Tayseer Alluni, al-Jazeera's famous reporter during the war in Afghanistan, was arrested in Spain on the charge of being a member of al-Qaeda. In 2005, he was sentenced to seven years in jail for collaborating with Bin Laden's network, a charge mainly based on the interview he conducted with al-Qaeda's leader following the 9/11 attacks.[101]

US officials accused al-Jazeera of acting as a mouthpiece for al-Qaeda and other militant groups targeting Coalition and local Iraqi forces after the invasion. The channel

[100] Miles, *Al Jazeera*, 227- 248.

[101] Ibid, 301- 317.

aired provoking tapes of Bin Laden, his right hand man Ayman Zawahiri, the overthrown Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, in addition to insurgencies and videos of hostages taken by Islamist militants in Iraq. The complaints drove Qatari Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Hamad bin Jasim bin Jabr Al Thani to promise his American counterpart Colin Powell that al-Jazeera would be subject to review. Following that, head of the channel's bureau in Iraq, Waddah Khanfar, was appointed general manager, and a "code of ethics" was issued outlining the network's journalistic standards in pursuing and broadcasting news. The code was similar to that of BBC and was the first of its kind in the Arab World. Notwithstanding, the network's editorial policy did not change with regard to its reporting of events in Iraq. On the contrary, its coverage of the battle of Fallujah between coalition forces and Iraqi militants triggered further American criticism. The channel was the only international news corporation in Falluja, and US officials accused it of inciting Arab viewers through its inflammatory coverage. In April 2004, President Bush mentioned the idea of bombing al-Jazeera's headquarters before British Prime Minister Tony Blair, as UK's Daily Mirror uncovered the following year. The new authorities in Iraq showed discontent regarding al-Jazeera's performance as well. In mid 2004, the Iraqi government passed a security law after which the channel was banned from operating in Baghdad.[102]

The 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon and 2008-2009 war on Gaza were also landmarks in the channel's evolutionary pattern, precisely because the network mirrored a general Arab popular fervor in favor of Hezbollah and Hamas during both wars. However, it was the popular uprisings sweeping the Arab World in 2011 that elevated al-Jazeera's status and placed it as a potent actor on the Arab stage. It was thus said that "the battle of hearts and minds in the Middle East [was] being fought not on the streets of Cairo, Tunis, Manama or Sana'a, but on the newscasts and talk shows of al-Jazeera".[103]

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[102] Miles, *Al Jazeera*, 295-331.

[103] "The Al Jazeera Effect: How the New Global Media are Shaping World Politics", *Al Jazeera Center for Studies*, accessed April 2, 2012 http://forum.aljazeera.net/node/215

Reconstructing the Arab public sphere

The Arab public sphere was shaped by a variety of factors. The main ones relate to the presence of a common Arab narrative of core regional issues and a shared negative stance towards Arab regimes, the domestic political pressures in different Arab states and the popular desire to circumvent them, and the rise of new information and communication technologies as tools for public debate. Al-Jazeera banked on these factors to create a transnational virtual space for public deliberation.

Lynch believed, however, that the discourse generated within the Arab public sphere does not match Habermas's model of a rational discourse earlier discussed. Sensationalism was rather a defining feature of the public's engagements with political affairs in the Arab World. Nevertheless, the newly emergent sphere represented a significant alteration of preceding public platforms. Although the rational element in its discourse was deficient, al-Jazeera's introduction of an interactive and participatory venue gave a voice to public dissent and criticism, and allowed for vocalizing questions of legitimacy regarding existing political orders in the Arab World.[104]

Lynch thought of the Arab public sphere as "a subordinate, dominated *counterpublic*" that was "challenging the dominant narrative and terms of discourse within American and global media".[105] Thus, the discourse it entailed was centered on issues pertaining to Pan Arab and Pan Islamic identities, and was often founded on parochial accounts of global politics. Mellor presented a similar account, as she argued that "the content of the Pan Arab media is usually elitist in that it focuses on foreign policies rather than on immediate social problems and needs in local societies".[106] Al-Jazeera's depictions of regional and international affairs demonstrated Lynch's idea of a counterpublic clearly, as it frequently emphasized a partisan rhetoric in its coverage of

[104] Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public*, 29-60.

[105] Ibid, 56-57.

[106] Noha Mellor, *Modern Arab Journalism: Problems and Prospects* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007) 115.

Arab events, and was critical – overtly or covertly – of America's policies in the Arab World. Adel Iskandar and Mohammed el-Nawary, on the other hand, approached the issue of the channel's politicized representation from a different perspective. Grounding on the assumption that "the journalistic standards applied require some form of contextual objectivity", they argued that although the medium should reveal all angles of a given story, it should retain "the values, beliefs, and sentiments of the targeted audience".[107] Seib added that most of the channel's spectators, albeit valuing credibility as an important attribute, want "news that is gathered independently for Arabs and by Arabs and that sees events through their eyes".[108] William Rough's analysis of anti-Americanism on Arab Television suggested similar conclusions, as he contended that "in every country, television and other media are shaped by the political, social, cultural, and historical environment in which they function".[109] This meant that al-Jazeera, as a channel voicing its audiences' concerns, was bound to vocalizing certain convictions that this audience holds, and one could argue that this form of partial representation - in the sense discussed above - does not differ much from Western media depictions of events, precisely those that spark patriotic fervor.

This thesis illustrates in detail how al-Jazeera voiced anti-regime sentiments (rather than anti-American ones) and represented the convictions of protesters calling for fundamental change during the Arab uprisings. This illustration, although partly overlapping with the aforementioned, serves in explaining the mechanisms through which the network influenced public discourse, rather than merely describing the outcomes of this discourse as these contributions do. Al-Jazeera's intellectual output was created by its guests' regular commentaries on the uprisings' daily events. Their powerful framing activity constituted the channel's means to deconstruct regime

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[107] Adel Iskandar and Mohammed El-Nawary, *Al Jazeera How the Free Arab News Network Scooped the World and Changed the Middle East* (Cambridge Center, 2002), 27.

[108] Seib, *The Al Jazeera Effect*, 143.

[109] William Rough, "Anti-Americanism on Arab Television: Some Outsider's Observation," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* 15 (2005), accessed May 14, 2012. http://tbsjournal.arabmediasociety.com/Archives/Fall05/Rugh.html.

legacies and promote the establishment of alternative social facts. These means are anatomized and analyzed in the following chapters with an aim to present a more compelling approach instead of one restricting its examination to the results of the discourse.

Al-Jazeera's coverage of Middle Eastern affairs promoted a Pan Arab and Pan Islamic discourse. American and Israeli wars on Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestinian territories between 1996 and 2010 caused wide public discontent in the Arab World. The Qatari network accordingly escalated it tone against American and Israeli policies in order to meet the expectations of tens of millions of its dissatisfied viewers. Many observers described its coverage of Arab affairs as maverick. According to Iskandar and Nawari, the channel has "revolutionized the media environment in the Arab World by broadcasting what no other Arab news organization dared to: the harsh, often hard truth of Arab life, culture, and politics".[110]

In a similar context, Rinnawi used the term *McArabism* to describe the channel's means of identification with its audience. He explained that McArabism is "a pan-Arab, regional expression of Arab identity".[111] It is an "outcome of new media technologies interacting with local trends and powers".[112] Rinnawi drew on Benjamin Barber's account in his famous article *Jihad vs. McWorld,* in which Barber thinks of the Muslim World as a field magnetized by two opposing forces of globalization: Jihad denoting a form of retribalization, and McWorld referring to an open space with high tech culture and capitalist interests. Rinnawi contended that the outcome resulting from the merger of these forces, or what Barber termed McJihad*,* is analogous to al-Jazeera's McArabism, or to the process bolstering Arab bonds through media technology - the latter being postmodern tools of globalization. Accordingly, al-Jazeera has successfully invested in its advanced technical capabilities to transmit Pan Arab (and Pan Islamist) fervor

[110] Iskandar and Nawari, *Al Jazeera,* 29.

[111] Rinnawi, *Instant Nationalism,* 20.

[112] Ibid*,* 15.

throughout the Arab World. Its transnational rhetoric expressed an Arab identity based on cultural and sectarian common grounds, in addition to shared political accounts of core regional issues. Rinnawi added that McArabism was driven by a variety of factors. The most important pertain to the Arab media's aim to expand their market and their need to avoid censorship apparatuses. Satellite transmission facilitated both issues, as it allowed the Arab media to criticize state policies while broadcasting from abroad and to the Arab audience at large.[113] Rinnawi's account, however, was also lacking reference to al-Jazeera's intellectual ingredient and an explanation of the mechanisms through which the channel creates meaningful ideational constructs.

The Arab uprisings revealed al-Jazeera's ability to voice dissent and therefore to construct, through intense framing processes that the channel and its guest intellectuals engaged in, a potent rationale delegitimizing Arab regimes. Al-Jazeera had previously been described as an "instrument for both marginal and silenced voices".[114] Iskandar and el-Nawari compared the network's mission to that of *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Europe*, both aiming to promote democratic values during the Cold War.[115] Lynch, on the other hand, drew a comparison between al-Jazeera and Gamal Abdel Nasser's *Voice of the Arabs*, which was the leading propaganda audio tool used by Nasser to promote Arab Nationalism in the 1950s and 1960s. To Lynch, both media outlets define their era. However, Voice of the Arabs was driven by ideology and was meant to mobilize masses through Nasser's fiery speeches and Ahmad Saeed's stimulating comments (Saeed was a leading media figure at the time), whereas al-Jazeera was able to create a space allowing an interactive public sphere to evolve rather than trying to directly interfere in shaping its discourse.[116]

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[113] Ibid, 7 – 25.

[114] Iskandar and El-Nawary, *Al Jazeera,* p. 50.

[115] Ibid*,* 40.

[116] Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public*, 36-41.

Iskandar suggested that al-Jazeera is "potentially a verbalization of Arab publics' critiques of government".[117] In an interesting note, however, he discussed whether the network represents a form of alternative media or a mere redefinition of the existing mainstream. He argued that for al-Jazeera to be alternative, it would have to affirm its "responsibility towards, and relationship to, social movements".[118] It would also have to disseminate "mobilizing information"[119] that allows it to engage with social movements and incite political change. In the course of his argument, he presented Downing's account which explains that alternative media "become specialized additions to the established media" when they act "within the general spectrum of established politics".[120] He then built on that to conclude that al-Jazeera's politicized news production is an "example of alterity mainstreamed",[121] as it presents a counterhegemonic form of information monopoly rather than an alternative to mainstream media. This, however, proved to be imprecise during the Arab uprisings, as al-Jazeera's engagement with events did not dismiss the social movements calling for change. Rather, its reporting was intentionally meant to provide its audience with forms of motivational framing, as shall be explained and discussed in later chapters.

Al-Jazeera's ability to impact the Arab public sphere stemmed from various factors. The first relates to the interplay that the channel has managed to create with its audience. Zayani argued that Arab viewers have developed "interactive habits which (made) them more than mere passive recipients".[122] Al-Jazeera played a substantial role in developing these habits. In this regard, Miles asserted that the channel has

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[117] Adel Iskandar, "Is Al-Jazeera Alternative? Mainstreaming Alterity and Assimilating Discourses of Dissent" in *The Real (Arab) World,* ed. Adel Iskandar et al, 250.

[118] Ibid, 250.

[119] Ibid*,* 251.

[120] Ibid, 257.

[121] Ibid*,* 258.

[122] Zayani, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 37.

"significantly expanded the parameters of debate (even) within families".[123] One could accordingly assume that the reconstruction of the Arab public sphere was a natural consequence of this interactive process, as the sphere's evolution was mainly reliant on a vibrant discourse regarding current political affairs.

A second factor is that relating to the channel's highly developed technical capabilities and well established journalistic standards. As mentioned earlier, al-Jazeera was the first network to issue a code of ethics in the Arab World, following American pressures and criticism regarding its coverage of post-Saddam Iraq.[124] The network often emphasized its distinction in this regard, as notions of objectivity were employed to advertise its output and to promote its coverage as being more reflective of reality than that of others.

However, the aforementioned is undermined by the third factor expanding al-Jazeera's leverage within the Arab public sphere: its tendency to adhere to the Arab public opinion and to the latter's accounts of grand regional issues. Al-Jazeera's engagement with the Palestinian cause has demonstrated this fact ever since the channel's advent. The same goes for the outlet's reporting on the siege of Iraq and the subsequent American war and occupation. In the professional sense, this is problematic because mirroring public opinion usually comes on the expense of applying journalistic standards. Asserting this idea, Fandy argued that many of the channel's reporters and anchors often cross the line separating journalism from political activism.[125] After analyzing the content of several shows broadcast on al-Jazeera, Fandy concluded that the "national origins and ideological leanings of Arab journalists shape the way the stories are reported to audiences".[126] Yet this inclination was not only an individual phenomenon, but also an institutional one. In this regard, Fandy thought of al-Jazeera as

[123] Miles, *Al Jazeera,* 344.

[124] Ibid, 328.

[125] Fandy, *(Un) Civil War of Words*, 98.

[126] Ibid, 101.

"the voice of the alliance between Arab Nationalists and Islamists".[127] The channel's editorial policy accordingly followed a Pan Arab and Pan Islamist line.

A fourth factor with a similar counter effect on objective journalistic standards relates to al-Jazeera's inflammatory tone regarding controversial issues. Providing the audience with inciting coverage has destabilized the channel's equilibrium on various occasions. Zayani, for instance, explained how the network's coverage of demonstrations opposing Arab governments was often of a reductionist nature, as such protests were frequently portrayed as representative of the public opinion at large.[128] Others underscored the distortions resulting from the channel's sensational coverage of events and its tendency to "create a background with subtle binaries indicating who the wrong and right parties are".[129] Yet many observers and spectators have hailed the channel's unconventional means of raising contentious issues. Sakr emphasized the advantages of al-Jazeera's breach of established norms as she argued that the network "made few concessions to sensitive egos worried about tarnished images or ridicule".[130] In the same context, Miles quoted the network's veteran anchor Faisal al-Kasim saying "I like de-iconizing icons" in his justification of the often provocative tone he uses on his weekly show *al-Ittijah al-Mu'akis*.[131] This policy of de-iconizing and of breaking taboos established al-Jazeera's reputation as an outlet that offers alternative depictions of reality and that defies existing structures of power. The Qatari network successfully invested in this policy for years before deploying it as a potent tool for deconstructing authoritative regime representations during the Arab uprisings. This policy was amplified by its guest intellectuals; a factor that none of the abovementioned contributions engages with.

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[127] Ibid, 130.

[128] Zayani, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 22.

[129] Rinnawi, *Instant Nationalism,* 123.

[130] Sakr, *Satellite Realms*, 130.

[131] Miles, *Al Jazeera*, 40.

The views aforementioned highlight the role of televised media in shaping public discourse and in constructing certain representations of reality and promoting them on the expense of others. A realist perspective adds to this account a dimension that relates media outlets to regional power discourse. In this regard, and despite substantial differences in style and news content, the main Arabic speaking news networks were generally viewed as extensions of regional power structures promoting individual state policies. In the following, we examine the relationship between al-Jazeera and its sponsoring state, Qatar, as well as the forms of investment in al-Jazeera's output that serve Doha's foreign policy, as seen by several scholars.

Al-Jazeera as a Qatari investment

This research investigates the processes of meaning construction via al-Jazeera and does not primarily reflect on the network's relationship with its sponsoring state and its deployment in regional power discourse. Nevertheless, and for the purpose of understanding the political context in which the outlet operates, we present this background of al-Jazeera's relationship with its partisan state, Qatar, and its role in interstate conflict, as portrayed by several accounts. This presentation also helps explain the chain linking al-Jazeera's intellectuals to the network itself, and the latter, as an institutional intellectual, to its partisan state, Qatar. It furthermore helps underscore the limitations of existing accounts regarding the issue, as none of them involves the possible deployment of individual intellectuals on al-Jazeera to mediate messages that mirror Qatar's regional policies.

The proliferation of satellite news networks introduced new means for political debate and enhanced the public's ability to imagine alternative political possibilities in the Arab World. Notwithstanding, most news outlets, as shown earlier, were extensions of regional players or reliant on their sponsorship. Fandy contends that most Arab televisions "are state constructions superimposed on the societies over which they rule".[132] Sakr adds that the "arrival of satellite channels did not in itself rupture the

[132] Fandy, *(UN)Civil War of Words*, 141.

relations of patronage that had previously dominated the region's television output".[133] Al-Jazeera marked no exception to this form of patronage. Yet the network's editorial style and margin of independence on the one hand, and the immense political outcomes of its coverage on the other, distinguished it from all of its Arabic speaking counterparts. After years of accumulating leverage in terms of shaping public opinion, al-Jazeera proved to be a potent Qatari investment, as it vitally engaged in formulating public discourse during the Arab uprisings.

Qatar's sponsorship of al-Jazeera was remarkably different from any other form of partisan relationship joining other Arab states to their official media outlets. This difference was established since the network's very early days. Upon the launching of al-Jazeera, the Qatari government abolished the Ministry of Information that was responsible for censorship. Its bold step constituted a precedent in the Arab World and was praised by many observers,[134] as it was thought to be part of the Emir's progressive reform of the state after seizing power in a bloodless coup against his father in 1995. The Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani, particularly stated that the government's decision conformed to his scheme of transforming the state into a parliamentary democracy.[135] Fandy contests this claim as he argues that al-Jazeera "is simply Qatar's Information Ministry with a new name and a new agenda".[136] His argument is based on two facts; the first pertaining to the network's managerial structure and means of administrative control, as it was headed by Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al Thani, a key figure in the Qatari ruling family and former Ministry of Information, and the second relating to the network's financial support, as its budget was provided by the Qatari state itself. Zayani presents a different viewpoint as he suggests that the channel has relative autonomy in terms of outlining its editorial policies, albeit it is sponsored and financed

[133] Sakr, *Arab Television Today*, 2.

[134] Iskandar and El-Nawary, *Al Jazeera,* 37.

[135] Sakr, *Arab Television Today,* 6.

[136] Fandy, *(Un) Civil War of Words*, 52.

by Qatar.[137] Nevertheless, he asserts that Doha instrumentally deploys the network for its own long-term projects. Accordingly, he thinks of al-Jazeera as "a showpiece of the Emir" that symbolizes his modernizing strategy and his aim to enhance the Emirate's profile on the regional and international arenas.[138]

Olivier Da Lage presents an interesting approach in which he relates al-Jazeera's intended outcomes to the disadvantages of Doha's strategic alliance with Washington. In this regard, Da Lage suggests that al-Jazeera and the United States "can be considered the twin pillars of Qatar's diplomacy":[139] the highly credible and reputable network in the eyes of a wide Arab audience was meant to counterbalance the side effects of hosting America's largest military base in the Middle East on Qatari soil. This duality enabled Qatar to broaden its margins of political maneuver and to elevate its bargaining position in regional affairs, as it banked on its ability to formulate an Arab public opinion critical of its regional foes to divert the public's attention from its own sensitive issues. This deployment of al-Jazeera, however, was thought to be a two edged sword, as it used costly tactics to enhance Doha's strategic position. Thus Da Lage argued that "while in the long run al-Jazeera serves the diplomatic interests of Qatar well, in the short run it complicates the tasks of the diplomats of this small emirate".[140] Nonetheless, he asserted that such deliberate contradictions in Qatar's foreign policy strengthen the Emirate's status in terms of regional power discourse, as they result in a double gain; on the one hand, they allow the Emirate to protect its security by hosting American troops, and on the other, they enhance its soft power capabilities and its ability to harass its regional counterparts through al-Jazeera.

[137] Zayani, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 17.

[138] Ibid*,* 12-13.

[139] Da Lage, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 64.

[140] Ibid, 49.

Oifi added to the aforementioned that Qatar aims to gain political advantages by capitalizing on pan-Arab and pan-Islamic sentiments to serve its interests,[141] yet he believed that al-Jazeera's impact on the Arab mediascape "is unlikely to give Qatar long-lasting political advantages".[142] Yet he underscored the immense impact of al-Jazeera on the Arab political system as a whole – which could be thought of as a Qatari objective in itself. In this regard, the network has breached conventional standards of compliance with the notion of "Arab solidarity", which, like ethics codification, actually denote adherence to political restraint. Al-Jazeera was thus a means to penetrate the Arab state system by emphasizing the presence of a public sphere independent of Arab state policies and their formal relations. In Oifi's words, "playing public opinion against the solidarity of Arab diplomacy, Qatar has managed to disturb in irremediable ways the nature and logic of Arab relationships".[143]

Al-Jazeera's output has also been examined in the context of Doha's need to deter foreign threats and balance against tendencies to establish regional hegemony. In this regard, Fandy presented a pervasive overview of Arab media discourse to suggest that satellite networks serve as tools for proxy wars, in the sense that their "programming is driven by intra-regional conflicts, including rivalries between state actors".[144] Accordingly, Fandy argued that Qatar deploys al-Jazeera to promote a dissident Islamist discourse. By hosting prominent Islamic figures affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood like Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, both as residents and frequent guests on its media outlet, the small emirate tries to balance the Islamic credentials of neighboring Saudi Arabia and Iran.[145] Thus, through al-Jazeera, it maintains strong relations with popular Islam without jeopardizing its connections with the United States.

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[141] Oifi, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 69.

[142] Ibid, 67.

[143] Ibid, 66.

[144] Fandy, *(UN)Civil War of Words,* 39.

[145] Ibid, 48-52.

The role that al-Jazeera played during the Arab uprisings by far exceeded all its previous contributions to Arab political discourse. Its sympathetic tone regarding political Islam enhanced the leverage of its framing processes as mentioned above and shall further be explained later. Yet the active engagement of its intellectuals with the discourse to construct alternative social realities in accordance with Qatar's visions emerged in the wake of the uprising in Egypt. Hence, it was only normal that this form of engagement was not addressed by any of the scholarly studies on al-Jazeera previous to the uprisings, nor was the intellectuals' instrumental use by Qatar in the course of achieving geopolitical goals.

Fandy once argued that the network's ability to harshly criticize Arab regimes is "a result of Qatar's breakaway from the Arab regional security system and its complete dependence on the United States".[146] He added that the channel's rhetoric is primarily affected by Doha's rivalry with Riyadh;[147] a standpoint that was shared by Oifi who related al-Jazeera's identity and editorial line to its assigned role in strengthening the Qatari regime and consolidating its regional status particularly in opposition to KSA, in addition to affirming its international presence and its recognition by Washington as a main regional ally.[148] It was no wonder, then, that Qatari-Saudi relations improved after al-Jazeera toned down its criticism of Riyadh's royal family starting 2009.[149] Doha's profitable investment in al-Jazeera has also driven some scholars to compare the network's influence with Qatar's actual capabilities in terms of human resources and in the context of regional geopolitics. In this regard, Iskandar and el-Nawary suggest that the power held by the network in the Middle East is "asymmetrical to Qatar's actual leverage in the international arena".[150] Nevertheless, the gulf emirate was able to expand

[146] Ibid, 53.

[147] Ibid, 58.

[148] Oifi, *The Al-Jazeera Phenomenon,* 69.

[149] Robert Booth, "Wikileaks cables claim al-Jazeera changed coverage to suit Qatari foreign policy", *the Guardian*, 6 December, 2010.

[150] Iskandar and El-Nawary, *Al Jazeera,*32.

its soft power by banking on al-Jazeera's outreach to millions of Arab viewers. The Qatari network has thus allowed Doha to maximize its benefit of the massive financial wealth it possesses and to compensate for its limited human resources and lack of heritage regarding active participation in regional power discourse.

Understanding the relationship between Qatar and al-Jazeera is important for any research that aims to examine the network's engagement with public discourse in the Arab World. Whether this relation is merely instrumental or fairly balanced, its outcome involves both, the network and its partisan state. Due to its administrative structures and means of financing earlier discussed, al-Jazeera's role cannot by any means surpass Qatari national interests nor can it be autonomous from Doha's regime calculations. This, for example, explains why Arab regimes targeted by al-Jazeera's coverage during the uprisings often accused Qatar of conspiring in response to the network's provocative coverage. Yet apart from few references to the regimes' reactions toward al-Jazeera and the role that the outlet's personnel played in connecting Libyan dissidents to Qatari officials, we do not dissect the relationship between the network and its partisan state further in the following chapters. This is because our research examines al-Jazeera's forms of engagement with events during the Arab uprisings rather than its instrumental deployment by its sponsoring state and the latter's political benefits from this deployment.

Conclusion

The relationship between media and politics has grown in terms of complexity and mutual impact, as cross-border communication underwent revolutionary advancements in the digital age we live in today. The impact of televised media on politics has been of a domestic and international nature. Often, it has resulted in shaping a public opinion that pressured governments to alter their policies. This has proven to be the case in democratic societies on various occasions. In states ruled by autocratic regimes, media outlets broadcasting from abroad have sometimes been able to promote the public's urge for change and to play a role in mobilizing masses under this pretext.

The Arab World, however, was governed by a set of conditions and particularities that distinguished it from other regional contexts. Its political permeability and linguistic commonalities allowed Arabic speaking satellite media outlets that emerged in the early 1990s to address Arab audiences residing in different states yet carrying shared concerns. Nonetheless, it wasn't before al-Jazeera's advent in 1996 that the Arab mediascape witnessed a radical turn in terms of output, as the Qatari sponsored channel engaged in promoting an unconventional media discourse critical of Arab regimes and sympathetic with dissident political claims.

Al-Jazeera's ability to construct an Arab public sphere where controversial political concerns were addressed in an unprecedented manner did not come without a price, as the channel faced various forms of harassment by different Arab authorities as shown in this chapter. However, it is precisely this vital engagement with public affairs that broadened the channel's scope of visibility in the Arab World and allowed it to attain international recognition. Al-Jazeera's leverage in terms of shaping an Arab public discourse was gradually achieved throughout the 15 years prior to the outburst of the Arab uprisings and has often been placed in the context of Qatar's desire to enhance its soft power capabilities vis-à-vis other regional players, KSA being the first and foremost until 2009. Thereafter, the channel's engagement with the popular uprisings that erupted late in 2010 marked the peak of its leverage. Various forms of framing and narrative construction were presented throughout its coverage. Articulate intellectuals who introduced a potent and engaging rationale with the popular discourse carried out this task, as shall be demonstrated in our case studies in chapters 4 and 5. This intellectual engagement had not been previously addressed in any of the scholarly contributions on al-Jazeera. In the next chapter, we shall present the theoretical framework that we intend to use in our analysis of the two cases.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

This chapter aims to construct a theoretical framework based on three bodies of literature; the first pertaining to the sociology of intellectuals, the second to framing and social movements, and the third to language and social constructivism. The first of these bodies underscores the relationship between intellectuals and social classes and classifies intellectuals under distinct categories for that matter. This taxonomy shall outline our understanding of al-Jazeera's intellectuals as being class-bound, or organically connected to the demonstrating masses during the Arab uprisings. It identifies the relationship between the third element in our matrix (intellectuals) and the first two (the media and the public). The second and third bodies of literature highlight the processes of interaction between the three elements aforementioned; one of them introduces the concept of framing and the various modes of engagement with social movements under this theoretical framework, and the other explicates how social realities are created through linguistic practices. Both serve in providing us with a conceptual tool for understanding how the processes of regime delegitimation took place in Egypt and Libya, as shall later be demonstrated.

As previously shown, the relationship between media and social realities has been approached in different ways by scholars belonging to various schools of thought and fields of social sciences. Televised media, our subject of study here, has mainly been depicted as a form of message production, transmission, and propagation through image and text representations. News coverage was accordingly thought to be a distorted narration of reality rather than a mere dissemination of information. However, the impact of media representations on the public, as shown by Habermas and later relevant contributions as well as by McLuhan and Baudrillard, was rarely associated with intellectual content. The literature on framing and social movements partially fills this

gap, especially the one explaining how collective action frames are delivered to audiences via media platforms. Yet even this theoretical framework was short of explicating how intellectual contributions pertain to the construction of social realities. John Searle's sociolinguistic theory, on the other hand, adequately addresses the issue of social reality construction, only irrespective of the tools used to achieve that. In our thesis, the tools used in this regard during the Arab uprisings were a media outlet (al-Jazeera) and its regularly hosted intellectuals. This chapter engages with all the aforementioned complementary explanatory models as a means to unpack the matrix comprising a powerful media outlet, articulate intellectuals, and protesting masses.

The chapter thus opens by presenting a taxonomy of intellectuals basing on the nature of their relationship with different social classes. Al-Jazeera's intellectual input and that of its guest commentators is associated with one of these taxonomies. It then unpacks the literature on framing and social movements, and highlights the various framing processes that influence public behavior regarding inflammatory political issues. Finally, it presents a sociolinguistic explanation of social constructivism. This explanation is used in later chapters as a means to expound how al-Jazeera's intellectuals capitalized on image representations of the Arab uprisings to deconstruct regime narratives and empower an opposing rationale. In the following, we introduce the different kinds of intellectuals and their relationship to social sectors, as a means to classify al-Jazeera's intellectual output and to further clarify its contribution to the popular uprisings.

Al-Jazeera's organic intellectuals

As this research tackles the complex process of narrative construction and promotion presented by al-Jazeera during the Arab uprisings, it elucidates the interplay between the network, the ideational constructs presented by its guest intellectuals, and the protesting masses acting within a dynamic public sphere. The research highlights the interactive process between those three fields in the course of answering its principle question: How did al-Jazeera's intellectual engagements with the Arab popular uprisings

contribute to the deconstruction of social realities and to the promotion of alternative political possibilities?

The question presented above introduces an element of intellectuality to the mediated content of the network under study. This intellectual ingredient reveals a new way of understanding media effect on politics. The argument here is that al-Jazeera was performing some sort of intellectual activity using various framing techniques. This was achieved by hosting articulate intellectuals to regularly comment on broadcast news, interpret its hidden implications, and introduce alternative possibilities to existing political realities. These intellectuals have performed an organic role, as we shall later explain and demonstrate. They have actively engaged with the popular discourse and have acted as producers and propagators of potent oratory that sought regime delegitimation. Their task could not have been carried out transnationally had it not been for their televised interplay with tens of millions of Arab spectators. They have built their constructs on powerful broadcast images, and this has allowed them to maximize their impact on mass perceptions and collective cognition. If one were to draw on Baudrillard's ideas regarding image creation, one could think of televised intellectuals as agents capitalizing on al-Jazeera's hyperreality to deconstruct authoritative legacies and legitimize an opposing rationale.

Not much work has been done regarding media and intellectuals. The contributions in this regard have merely touched on the subject without presenting a novel inquiry. In the 1990s, Kellner argued that "intellectuals who wish to intervene in the new public spheres need to deploy new communications media to participate in democratic debate and to shape the future of contemporary societies and culture".[151] This brings us back to the distinction earlier presented between interactive publics and media publics. Such associations between intellectuals and the public sphere, however, did not introduce thorough elaborations on the subject. The case of al-Jazeera that this

[151] Douglas Kellner, "Intellectuals and New Technologies," *Media, Culture, and Society,* 17 (1995), accessed August 20, 2013. https://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/intellectualsnewtechnologies.pdf.

research explores, on the other hand, constitutes an expressive demonstration of the additions that intellectuals can give to media texts and imagery as a means to increase their effect on the public. It goes beyond earlier scholarly works regarding the matrix joining media, politics, and intellectuals, whether in general theory or within the context of Arab mediascapes.

When introducing the element of intellectuality, one should define what is meant by the term, what types of intellectuals relate to the aims of this research, and what should be ruled out in terms of meaning and classification. It is also important to discuss the aforementioned organicity of intellectuals, since the term *organic intellectual* is initially a Marxist description that Antonio Gramsci introduced to explore a certain kind of intellectuals who take part in intrastate class conflict.

In *The Sociology of Intellectuals,* Kurzman and Owens provide a broad definition of intellectuals. They describe them as "producers or transmitters of culture or ideas, or members of either category who engage in public issues".[152] They follow that by presenting a taxonomy that emerged in the 1920s, in which intellectuals were sorted into three categories: as an independent class, as class-bound, and as class-less. Gramsci's recognition of the intellectuals' organic role stemmed from this trinary taxonomy: he viewed them as class-bound individuals having a social function. This function was contingent on social class dialectics, as each of the bourgeois and the proletariat produced its own intellectuals who actively took part in promoting the interests of the class they identify themselves with.[153]

The assumption that intellectuals form an independent class, on the other hand, was introduced by Benda then developed by further contributions to the topic, including Bourdieu's account of intellectuals as "free floating" and as forming their own autonomous sphere. Bourdieu's reference to an "intellectual field" binding intellectuals

[152] Charles Kurzman and Lynn Owens, "The Sociology of Intellectuals", *The Annual Review of Sociology*, 28 (August 2002), 63.

[153] Ibid, 66.

and their activity was totally dismissive of Gramsci's idea of social organicity. It was rather focused on their "independence of religious, political, economic or other powers".[154]

The third category of intellectuals that neither of the first two accounts conformed to was that of class-less intellectuals. This account, celebrated by Mannheim, Shils and others, discarded the assumption that intellectuals are bound to their class of origin as well. Yet it portrayed them as moderators of social debate whereby they transcend divisional lines rather than constitute a self-defining class. As such, they were thought of as "people concerned with the meaning of symbolic systems rather than with the interaction and contention of social groups".[155]

The classification of intellectuals mentioned above is based on the presence or the lack of social class contingency. Another way of looking at intellectuals is by categorizing them according to their representational power. In *Intellectuals: Aesthetics, Politics, Academics,* a number of scholars presented useful contributions regarding the intellectual's role, its limitations, and its representational validity. The book highlights a range of understandings including those of Habermas, Gramsci, Foucoult, and Deleuze.

In the presented works of Habermas, the role of intellectuals in inducing change and crafting its instruments is understood with relevance to a vibrant public sphere. The latter frames the debate between communicators whose critical engagement with their current affairs allows them to act as catalysts for social transformation.[156] Habermas's ideas regarding intellectuals mainly serve in highlighting their role in the public sphere formation earlier discussed. However, they do not present a significant insight regarding their representational powers.

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[154] Ibid, 79.

[155] Ibid, 68.

[156] Stanley Aronowitz, "On Intellectuals" in *Intellectuals: Aesthetics, Politics, Academics*, ed. Bruce Robins (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990) 34.

Gramsci's thoughts, on the other hand, present an interesting approach that this research deploys, although they preceded the emergence of new media. His portrayal of intellectuals distinguishes between traditional and organic intellectuals. The former are not representative of particular social interests, yet they are bound to the institutions of the established order, whereas the latter act as "historical agents" that articulate the concerns of hegemonic or counterhegemonic classes.[157] Gramsci emphasizes the role of organic intellectuals as "functionaries"[158] of the social fabric they interact with, and as "persuaders" who bear historical and political liability.[159] In his proposed mode of intellectual participation, each historical agent acts as a "constructor, organizer and permanent persuader", rather than "just a simple orator".[160] Accordingly, the organic process is "bound by an intellectuals-mass dialectic".[161] Gramsci's organic form of intellectual output is thus representational, since the functions of a class-bound intellectual in terms of narrative construction and organization involve representing the needs and demands of the social class in question.

Gramsci's account of intellectuals diverges from that of Foucault and Deleuze since the latter stress postrepresentational politics, undermining representation and condemning universal intellectuals for being archaic. In their view, the vanguardist role of intellectuals has been replaced by collective discourse with local needs and imaginations. Accordingly, the masses no more need to rely on mediators to project their thoughts and demands in the form of representation. Rather, they are capable of directly transforming their thoughts into action and, subsequently, of replacing theory with practice and of acting as *specific intellectuals*, as opposed to the traditional (and

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[157] Ibid, 11-12.

[158] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 12.

[159] R. Radhakrishnan, "Toward an Effective Intellectual: Foucault or Gramsci?" in *Intellectuals,* 66-67, 86-88.

[160] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 10.

[161] Radhakrishnan, "Toward an Effective Intellectual?" in *Intellectuals*, 89.

representative) universal intellectuals.[162] Foucault thus explains that specific intellectuals are individuals who lack representational power and rather enact their local demands with no reference to universal guidelines. If we were to project this view on the Arab uprisings, we would think of intellectual participation as that pertaining to the role of activists on the ground. This view would disarm al-Jazeera's intellectuals of any role in shaping popular discourse through representation.

Foucault's notion of the intellectual, like that of Gramsci, thus falls under the category of class-bound intellectuals, since his specific intellectuals are involved in the discourse as part of the active public. Nevertheless, his notion does not serve the purpose of this study, as our research highlights the role of mediated content, whereas Foucault decelebrates representational forms of intellectual output. Hence, this rules his model out, since media (and intellectuals using media platforms) - by definition - are representational.

This research underscores the role played by al-Jazeera's intellectuals in shaping public discourse during the Arab uprisings, and thus tackles their engagement with protesting masses. Deploying Gramsci's account of the intellectual in this regard could be quite problematic, however. One could argue that using Gramsci's notion of organicity in our explanatory model restricts us to a traditional Marxist understanding of the relationship between intellectuals and social classes. This does not serve our purpose, as al-Jazeera's intellectuals engaged with class transcendent protests and addressed demonstrators regardless of their class of origin. They served in constructing a narrative conforming to al-Jazeera's editorial policies that changed from one country to another depending on the calculations of the network's partisan state, Qatar. An altered version of Gramsci's model is hence useful for the aims of this research, as shall briefly be explained in the following.

Gramsci introduced the idea of class-bound intellectuals as he argued that "every social group creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals

[162] Ibid, 66-81.

which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function".[163] Thus, intellectuals act as the "group's deputies" [164] whether in the course of maintaining its social hegemony and political domination or in the process of countering both. Yet his Marxist account was thereafter developed or reinvented by other philosophers and scholars. In this regard, some views stressed "authenticity" rather than "social class" as a theme to which intellectuals are bound to regarding their relationship with society. Such accounts underscored national, ethnic, and cultural considerations instead of economic ones, especially in postcolonial literature. Other views, like those of Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, linked intellectuals to social movements in general, thus freeing them from identification with static social groups in the first place.[165] Accordingly, Gramsci's formulation was "turned on its head: Instead of groups producing their own organic intellectuals, intellectuals may be producing their own organic groups".[166] The term *movement intellectuals* was used in this regard to denote the individuals "who through their activities articulate the knowledge interests and cognitive identity of social movements".[167] Movement intellectuals were therefore class-bounds producers and transmitters of ideas - as classified by Kurzman and Owen - and the notion was a reinvention of Gramsci's initial account of organic intellectuals, as it related intellectuals to social movements rather than social classes. Our research intends to use the term *organic* in this sense; as one denoting a relation to social movements. What interests us here is the agentive function of intellectuals proposed by Gramsci; the fact that they engage in a process which is "active rather than descriptive" and where "analysis is guided towards strategy".[168] This creative tendency to interact with the public and to

[163] Antonio Gramsci*, "The Formation of Intellectuals" in* The Modern Prince and Other Writings (New York: International Publishers, 1968), 118.

[164] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 12.

[165] Kurzman and Owens, "The Sociology of Intellectuals", 74-77.

[166] Ibid, 76.

[167] Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 98.

[168] John Merrington, *Theory and Practice in Gramsci's Marxism* (London: Verso, 1968),152.

counter hegemonic narratives reflects the role played by al-Jazeera's intellectuals. Their organicity is hence a functional one rather than a Marxist social class form of identification.

In summary, the category of class-bound intellectuals having representational power best defines the intellectuals that this research wishes to examine. The latter performed a televised interplay with demonstrating masses. They were mediated to the audience and were thus part of al-Jazeera's representational output. They acted as vanguardist figures reflecting on the discourse from a macrological perspective rather than practically engaging with it, which rules Foucault's model of specific intellectuals out. They were also class-bound because they engaged with the uprisings' mass activity and its aspirations, and, subsequently, with the "class" of protesting activists themselves, or the counterhegemonic social movements opposing existing regimes in various Arab states. The intellectuals thus performed an *organic* role in the sense that they acted as "permanent persuaders" advocating a certain narrative of the uprisings. Their contribution impacted mass perceptions and introduced provocative accounts of an unfolding popular discourse in the process of delegitimizing regime rationales. The mode of narrative construction and deconstruction they presented added to the persuasive leverage of al-Jazeera, as it gave further meaning to its broadcast hyperreality. It was thus a potent tool for revolutionizing the Arab public sphere.

Al-Jazeera's mediated intellectual output can be thought of as a process performed by individual figures and their medium as well. This research underscores the interplay between those intellectuals and a revolutionary public discourse. The intellectuals, acting as "experts in legitimation" (as Gramsci described organic intellectuals),[169] were constructing narratives that legitimize the need for change, and this creative engagement with events was by no means far from Qatar's foreign policy considerations. We base on that to claim that this form of organic intellectuality can be stretched further to describe al-Jazeera's function as a whole. In a sense, the Qatari

[169] Ibid, 154.

outlet presented a new form of organic mediation. The network itself, as a collective entity, engaged in a complex process of image creation, narrative construction, and vibrant interaction with protesting masses. It could thus be thought of as an institutional organic intellectual. This concept is similar to Gramsci's understanding of the collective intellectual that he uses in reference to revolutionary parties. It could also be associated with Kai Hafez's description of al-Jazeera as "one of the most important de facto Arab political parties",[170] except that political parties are actors in a power struggle whereas media are supposedly interactive spheres reflecting and affecting this struggle without taking part in it as power seeking actors. Al-Jazeera's interchange with the Arab public sphere and its intellectuals' ability to "make sense" of events and fuel them with political and moral (or religious) incentives presented a new mode of intellectual participation in public discourse. The performance of al-Jazeera as an institutional organic intellectual will be further clarified in light of our discussion of Searle's model of social constructivism. Yet prior to that, we present the notion of framing and its relevance to social movements that we shall later use in analyzing our two case studies.

Framing and social movements

The term framing signifies the process of meaning construction. To social movement scholars, it is a phenomenon characterized by four main attributes: it is active, processual, agentive, and confrontational. It is active because it is based on initiative; processual because it entails an evolving process; agentive since it involves activists or social movements; and confrontational due to its challenge of other existing frames.[171]

Because objects have no intrinsic meanings, as Robert Benford explains, "meaning is negotiated, contested, modified, articulated, and rearticulated. In short,

[170] Kai Hafez, "Arab Satellite Broadcasting Democracy without Political Parties?" in *The Real (Arab) World,* ed. Kai Hafez et al, 275.

[171] Robert Benford and David Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26 (2000), 614.

meaning is constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed".[172] In this context, the process of framing involves an interpretive function, as it renders events meaningful by "condensing aspects of the world out there"[173] and pointing out their significance. The outcome of this framing activity is known as *collective action frames*. These frames are "action-oriented sets of beliefs" that "legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization".[174]

Collective action frames are carried out by those who endorse altering existing social or political conditions, and are usually challenged by their antagonists through an opposing process called *counterframing*. They enclose three complimentary phases that begin with highlighting the causes for dissent in a certain setting and build on that to provoke action. During the first phase of this process, activists or social movements calling for change in their community diagnose what they believe are problematic conditions and identify their sources of causality (players to be blamed and held responsible), a step which is known as *diagnostic framing*. Diagnostic framing allows for drawing the line between the protagonists and antagonists of the movement in question; the former advocating change and endorsing the diagnosis presented, and the latter opposing it and defending the existing order. This step is usually followed by a second one termed *prognostic framing*, in which activists propose solutions for such problems, set strategies to engage with them, and design plans to "fix" them. It usually includes "refutations of the logic or the efficacy of solutions advocated by opponents as well as a rationale for its own remedies".[175] Following that is the third step that constitutes a call for collective action, known as *motivational framing*. This step bases on the diagnosis and prognosis presented to incite social mobilization in pursuit of the desired change. In this regard, social movement protagonists often amplify (and

[172] Robert Benford, "An Insider's Critique of the Social Movement Framing Perspective," *Sociological Inquiry*, 67 (1997), 410.

[173] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 614.

[174] Ibid, 614.

[175] Ibid, 617.

exaggerate) opportunities that a specific context offers in order to provoke popular action.[176] The concept of political opportunity is central in understanding and analyzing framing processes, as it constitutes a "variable that shapes how challenging groups perceive the likelihood of successes".[177] The phase of motivational framing involves constructing and articulating vocabularies of motive and thus entails an element of agency.[178] The articulators acting as agents in our thesis are al-Jazeera's regularly hosted intellectuals.

As mentioned above, this social activity aiming to alter political realities is rarely carried out without facing resistant forms of *counterframing*. The latter is presented by societal sectors endorsing the maintenance of the status quo, and the end result of this dialectical process illustrates the extent and forms of change undergone by the society concerned. The contentious nature of framing and counterframing forces the protagonists and antagonists of social movements to constantly develop their diagnoses and prognoses as a means to defend the legitimacy of their demands. During the Arab uprisings, the protagonists of demonstrations calling for political change labelled their movements as "uprisings" or "revolutions" carried out by "young rebels" aiming for "reform", "democracy", "social justice" etc. Whereas the counterframes promoted by their antagonists claimed that the movements in question were a form of "chaotic disorder" resulting from a "conspiracy" and carried out by "thugs" or "extremists" etc. In parallel to those diagnostic framing debates, the proposed strategies or prognoses offered by both sides changed in accordance with the evolution of the discourse: whenever authorities felt they had the upper hand, they withheld or minimized their offers for concession; and whenever activists thought their movement was advancing and the regime was weakening, they accented their demands and radicalized their tone.

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[176] Hank Johnston and John A. Noakes (ed.), *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 2.

[177] Ibid, 20.

[178] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 617.

The outcome of this discourse is contingent on the potency of the framing activity carried out by each side. In this regard, *frame resonance* is of central importance. By frame resonance we mean the significance and impact of articulated frames on the targets of mobilization. Frame resonance is measured with reference to two main factors: credibility and relative salience. Credibility in turn is dependent on three complimentary factors. The first is frame consistency, which means that the beliefs and claims of the social movement in question (or its antagonists in the case of counterframing) should not be contradictory. The second factor relates to the frame's empirical credibility, which means that the social movement's applied tactics should be consistent with the beliefs and claims articulated. The third factor concerns the credibility of frame articulators who, in our case, are al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals. In this regard, the more credible the articulators are, the more persuasive leverage they have and, thus, the more potent and outreaching their promoted frames become. As for the relative salience of collective action frames, it is measured with reference to the targets of mobilization: the more significant the social movement's beliefs and claims are for those targets, the greater possibility there is to mobilize them. This is why whenever collective action frames are abstract and detached from everyday experiences, their significance for the targets of mobilization decreases, whereas the more relevant and applicable they are to their daily lives, the more salient they become. This is referred to as the *experimental commensurability* of collective action frames, or their degree of relevance to the actual experiences of individuals or social sectors.[179]

Al-Jazeera's intellectuals deployed various framing techniques in the course of their engagement with the Arab uprisings. They used diagnostic framing to point out the deficiencies of the contested regimes and to assign blame and responsibility in this regard. In each of our case studies, the network's commentators argued that the whole regime is in need of change rather than merely the government or other parts of the executive branch. The degree of change promoted varied between Egypt and Libya in accordance with the different contextualizing variables and the evolving discourse in

[179] Ibid, 619-621.

each setting. This is why the prognoses suggested ranged from appeasing the military and advocating a peaceful resignation of the president in the case of Egypt, and calling for defection from the army and for the assassination of the "Leader" in the case of Libya. The processes of motivational framing also differed between Egypt and Libya as the prognosis diverged, albeit pushing for a full-fledged uprising in both cases.

Al-Jazeera's intellectuals engaged in strategic processes through *frame bridging* and *frame amplification*. Through frame bridging, the network's guest intellectuals drew links between frames pertaining to two different cases having similar attributes. Their frequent references to the uprising in Tunisia in the course of commenting on the Egyptian uprising serve as a good example in this regard. The aim of this bridging was to highlight similarities that would help legitimize the frames they promote basing on past experience. Frame amplification, on the other hand, was a technique used to accent certain issues and condense their meaning in brief expressions of symbolic implications. Slogans such as "the people want to overthrow the regime" were often highlighted in the framing processes that al-Jazeera's intellectuals carried out. Such forms of frame amplification served to pinpoint the primary objectives of the social movements in question as imagined by al-Jazeera's intellectuals and to place these objectives under strategic guidelines.

Al-Jazeera's intellectuals sometimes performed *frame disputes* whereby they argued with other protagonists of the same social movements about the diagnoses and prognoses of certain issues. These disputes resulted from divergent viewpoints within the same camp regarding the causes of problems that the social movement aims to remedy and the proposed forms of action in response. This was especially evident in the case of Egypt, where the network's guest commentator Azmi Bishara engaged in such disputes with local Egyptian dissident elites. The disputes primarily revolved around the question of whether the uprising should aim to reconstruct the whole regime or whether it would suffice to accept partial or gradual change instead.

However, the contentious feature of al-Jazeera's collective action frames was a result of inter-movement rather than intra-movement disputes. In this regard, al-Jazeera's intellectuals often engaged with counterframing processes in response to regime propaganda. In turn, both Egyptian and Libyan authorities targeted the channel nonstop in order to undermine its narrative and promote counterframes celebrating their policies. This discursive contest was a daily practice that involved various forms of framing. Its aim was to construct a potent narrative that delegitimizes that of the opponent, proposes solutions, and calls for action.

The literature on framing and social movements has evolved considerably since the mid-1980s. Yet it still suffers from various shortcomings that pioneering scholars in the field have confessed. In his critique of the social movement framing perspective, for example, Benford points out the abundance of conceptual elaborations on the topic as opposed to the scarcity of systematic empirical studies, precisely in terms of comparative research,[180] a gap that this research partly contributes to filling by empirically examining two different cases involving social movement framing with varying outcomes. In addition to that, even the existing body of empirical research lacks a pervasive understanding of the role of the intellectual-media "alliance" in creating collective action frames. Such was the case, for example, in *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective,* in which a number of scholars addressed a selection of case studies from across the globe that illustrate framing and mobilization processes, non-movement framing via the media (rather than social movement framing), and framing and political opportunities. [181] On the other hand, the literature that does address the role of intellectuals fails in comprehensively situating this role in a media-related context, and, when it does, it dismisses the element of social construction as a potential outcome of meaning construction; an issue that we address in this thesis by integrating Searle's paradigm of social constructivism explained next. This shortcoming,

[180] Benford, "An Insider's Critique", 411.

[181] Johnston and Noakes, *Frames of Protest.*

for example, could be noticed in the volume on *Popular Intellectuals and Social Movements.*[182]

This thesis analyzes the framing processes carried out by al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals with an aim to crystallize a narrative that serves in delegitimizing existing regimes and discrediting their policies. Various forms of framing and counterframing were employed in this discourse by the social movements' protagonists and antagonists in Egypt and Libya. Our reference to the concept of framing is meant to explicate the modes of meaning construction in this regard. However, it falls short of linking the creation of meaning to social reality construction. In the following, we present John Searle's account of constructed social realities and deploy it as a theoretical framework to explain how the intellectuals' articulations on al-Jazeera served in both, deconstructing regimes institutions and promoting alternative political possibilities.

The construction of social realities

Our research aims to interpret the complex relationship between media, intellectuals, and political discourse in the Arab World during its recent popular uprisings. The fact that media representations were established through broadcast imagery and linguistic practices suggests the need to deploy an explanatory model that highlights their significance in relation to political realities. We have already engaged with the literature pertaining to the power of broadcast imagery. In the following, we introduce John Searle's model explaining how realities are socially constructed to further unravel this matrix and systematically engage with the linguistic practices (that take the form of intellectual articulations) it comprises.

In *The Construction of Social Reality,* Searle distinguishes between *brute facts* and *institutional facts*. The former are independent of human constructs of representation whereas the latter's existence is contingent on human made institutions -

[182] Michiel Baud and Rosanne Rutten (ed.), *Popular Intellectuals and Social Movements: Framing Protest in Asia, Africa, and Latin America,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

particularly the institution of language.[183] Searle's account stresses "the logical priority of brute facts over institutional facts",[184] since brute facts constitute the basic building blocks of every institutional fact. Brute facts, as defined by Searle, are ontologically objective. They do not rely on external factors to satisfy their characteristic features since they exist regardless of any form of representation. They are subjects with self-defining characteristics that social descriptions do not construct nor alter. A rock, for example, does not fulfill its definition as such through representation. Its properties are rather ontologically "real". Institutional facts, on the other hand, are ontologically subjective even though they are generally epistemically objective. They are ontologically subjective due to their dependence on (subjective) human constructs of representation, without which they have no social meaning. At the same time, they are generally epistemically objective because the meaning "imposed" on them by such representations does not vary with the variance of the individuals perceiving them. This is because their meaning, even though a human construct, is acquired through collective social recognition.[185]

One could further understand the distinctions aforementioned through the following illustration: the existence of a piece of wood is a brute fact. It is ontologically objective. It exists regardless of socially constructed definitions of it. The fact that several pieces of wood constitute a table is a social fact (or institutional fact). This fact is ontologically subjective: we choose to call it a table due to the meaning we impose on it and the function we give it in a social context. It is not a table by mere existence. It is also epistemically objective, as, due to the collective social recognition of it as a table acquiring a certain function, it does not bear any other meaning or form of representation. Thus, a table is an ontologically subjective yet epistemically objective fact, as most other institutional facts are.

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[183] John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (London: Penguin Press, 1995) 27.

[184] Ibid, 34.

[185] Ibid, 63.

To Searle, the linguistic element, which is a form of representation, is partly constitutive of social (or institutional) facts, as it provides these facts with meaning. The idea here is that "the capacity to attach sense, a symbolic function, to an object that does not have that sense intrinsically is the precondition (…) of all institutional reality".[186] Language, thus, gives birth to meaning, and the latter establishes social realities that would never have been existent had it not been for certain "symbolic devices, such as words, that by convention mean or represent or symbolize something beyond themselves".[187]

A more complex example of an institutional fact created through the institution of language is that of *declaring war*. Such a declaration, mainly resulting from linguistic performances, is constitutive of reality - that of war - and has consequences in terms of casualties, destruction, and other ontologically objective brute facts. As Searle explains, "a very large number of institutional facts can be created by explicit performative utterances".[188] War is one of them. The government declaring war is an institutional fact itself. It is a collective expression of a staff of ministers. During the crisis, each minister acts after the declaration of war in accordance to the power given to him or her. This power results from the meaning imposed on another institutional fact - that of being a minister - and the function assigned to this socially constructed reality. Accordingly, the Minister of Defense, basing on certain constitutional provisions (that also constitute institutional facts themselves), can issue decrees relating to the state's security. Decrees, usually taking the form of documents, are institutional facts as well because the power they have results from the meaning assigned to them that has gained social acceptance. We can further deconstruct the elements in this example until we reach the very basic brute facts of which such institutional facts and their less complex institutional compositions are made up of. This account introduces a useful method to uncover the

[186] Ibid, 75.

[187] Ibid, 60.

[188] Ibid, 34.

very basic elements that have been socially redefined (or represented), in a structural and hierarchical order, thus giving birth to institutional facts that frame social relations.

The abovementioned example demonstrates a central idea introduced by Searle, through which he emphasizes that, in order to produce meaning, "institutional facts cannot exist in isolation but only in a set of systematic relations to other facts".[189] He accordingly asserts that the "structure of institutional facts is a structure of power relations".[190] In this sense, institutional facts form the building blocks of society. Their mere existence results from the meanings assigned to brute facts or other less complex institutional facts which - in turn - follow the same mechanism of meaning imposition to attain their own existence. Accordingly, the *meaning imposition* on facts, rendering them institutional, is creative of social order and constructive of its hierarchies and relations. Searle sums up his argument by asserting that the "decisive step in the creation of social reality is the collective intentional imposition of function on entities that cannot perform those functions without that imposition".[191] This statement is represented by the formula of *X counts as Y in c*; *X* being the entity in question, *Y* being the human constructs of representation assigning a *status* and a *function* to this entity, and *c* being the context in which this entity functions. Thus, in Searle's words:

"Humans, through collective intentionality, impose functions on phenomena where the function cannot be achieved solely in virtue of physics and chemistry, but requires continued human cooperation in the specific forms of recognition, acceptance, and acknowledgement of a new status to which a function is assigned. This is the beginning point of all institutional forms of human culture, and it must always have the structure of X counts as Y in c".[192]

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[189] Ibid, 35.

[190] Ibid, 94.

[191] Ibid, 41.

[192] Ibid, 40.

Searle's model emphasizes the role of language in constructing social realities, yet it does not repudiate realist arguments. The discussion pertaining to social constructivism versus realism does not concern us here. However, his methodology for explaining the process of reality construction in the social world is beneficial for the purpose of this study. As previously explained, to Searle, institutional facts are language contingent,[193] and the "move from the brute to the institutional status is a linguistic move, because the *X* term now symbolizes something beyond itself".[194] Language is thus a form of representation that attaches meaning to facts, making them institutional or socially constructed. This imposition of function requires *collective intentionality* or social acceptance.[195] And when the *status-functions* imposed on a certain set of facts are no more collectively recognized, institutional facts simply lose meaning and therefore collapse. The disintegration of the Soviet Union is a large-scale illustration of this argument. According to Searle, the communist model collapsed because the system of status-functions imposed on institutional facts no more bore collective recognition.[196] In other words, a whole regime of symbolic representations was gradually hollowed until it lost its social significance. This research highlights a similar process of regime delegitimation that took place during the Arab popular uprisings. And by regime, we mean both senses of the word: a system of representations, and a governing body that has for long maintained manufactured social consent regarding its own perceptions and representations of reality.

In the course of the uprisings, mediated intellectual output played a significant role in verbalizing the meanings and implications of daily transformations and in injecting the active masses with further incentives to pursue political change. It incorporated two simultaneous processes of narrative construction and deconstruction. The first suggested an alternative mode of legitimacy, and the second conveyed

[193] Ibid, 64.

[194] Ibid, 73.

[195] Ibid, 40.

[196] Ibid, 92.

delegitimizing rhetoric of the established order. In this mediated war of representations between the uprisings' protagonists and antagonists, the legitimacy of certain conceptual schemes was questioned. The promotional narratives presented by Arab regimes to protract their status quo were challenged by graphic illustrations of brute facts that discredit this narrative and by powerful oratory that serves to propose alternative institutional facts to existing ones. The expansion of protests proved that the regimes' authoritarian propaganda and rhetorical constructs of suppression were weaker than the various forms of articulations promoting these alternative political possibilities.

The rhetorical constructs promoted by al-Jazeera's intellectuals were meant to void the narratives of the regimes in question and prove their falsity. Various techniques were deployed in this regard to attain this intended goal. One could accordingly identify a number of linguistic categories that serve to clarify the techniques used by al-Jazeera's intellectuals. The first involves mockery and ridicule whereby the regimes and their leading figures were targeted by contemptuous language in order to demean them in the eyes of the public involved in the revolutionary discourse. This method contributed to deconstructing the authoritative image that the regimes had managed to create and sustain for decades, and was therefore used to counter the authorities' tools of intimidation and to "break the wall of fear" that had handicapped large portions of the population in Egypt and Libya. In the case of Egypt, al-Jazeera and its commentators used satire to mock the president's account of constitutional legitimacy and his depictions of the uprising as a form of conspiracy. Through ridicule, they also disparaged his status-function as a president with absolute political power. The tone used regarding president Mubarak's deputy Omar Suleiman was demeaning as well, precisely when it came to his "lack of charisma" and his propagation of the "misleading" dichotomy of chaos versus stability that was meant to prolong the regime's status quo. The same applies to Libya, only with more intensity, as Mo'ammar Gaddafi, or *the Leader*, was depicted as an insane character whose arguments lacked logical rigor. His ideology, attitude, and language were overtly demeaned on multiple occasions as a means to de-iconize his stature and delegitimize his authority.

The second technique used was that which involved demonizing the foe. This was especially evident in the case of Libya, as the vocabulary deployed to describe events was meant to serve a narrative of "good versus evil". This was not hard to attain given the regime's unconcealed aggression in terms of language and action alike. Thus was the usage of terms like *mercenaries* and *warlords* by al-Jazeera's guests to depict Gaddafi, his sons, and their loyalists, as opposed to the recurrent emphasis on terms like *the Libyan people* in the course of describing armed rebels and political dissidents in order to legitimize their narrative and forms of action, and to present them as coinciding with a collective intentionality aiming to uproot the existing political order. The same goes for the commentators' emphasis on Gaddafi's character as one reflective of megalomania and narcissism.

The third linguistic category involves the usage of imperative verbs that were meant to reinforce action as part of the guests' motivational framing processes and to restrict the protesters' forms of action to certain desired means. This was especially obvious in the commentaries of both Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi and Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi. In the case of Egypt, for example, al-Qaradawi used a deterministic tone accenting the certainty of triumph yet insisted on peaceful means to achieve that. Thus was his emphasis that damaging public and private property and resorting to violence were religiously forbidden or *haram*. Things were different, however, in the case of Libya, as not only did al-Qaradawi and al-Sallabi hail protesters for their endurance, but also called for defection from the regime's political, diplomatic, military, and security institutions and for resisting the regime's use of force. Al-Qaradawi also issued a fatwa that called for the physical extermination of Gaddafi as a means to dismantle the regime's institutional facts by using forceful means.

The fourth category of linguistic devices used is relevant to the abovementioned, as it involves the clerics' glorification of martyrdom in the course of resisting the Libyan regime's use of brute force. For that, al-Qaradawi and al-Sallabi deployed citations from the Quran as well as Islamic litanies to lift the spirits of the rebels and to extol the utmost price that one could pay in the quest for freedom. Motivational frames were

accordingly used to emphasize the worthiness of sacrifice in the process of deconstructing social realities, as its outcomes comprise of a worldly progression of the Muslim community as a whole, and of heavenly returns for individual martyrs.

In the course of the aforementioned, this research applies Searle's conceptual framework in order to demonstrate how the Egyptian and Libyan regimes' institutional facts targeted by al-Jazeera and its intellectuals were voided from their persuasive leverage through simultaneous mechanisms of meaning construction and deconstruction. It explores the means through which the status-functions of certain regime institutions were demeaned and pictured as irrational, archaic, unethical, and conflicting with collective social interests. The aim was to disarm them from the element of collective intentionality. A parallel process was presented in which alternative institutions having different status-functions were proposed and propagated. The research accordingly presents an analysis of the language used by al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals in this regard. It examines this language, its implications, and its relevance to political transformations during the uprisings in the states concerned.

Searle's model thus complements the conceptual tools provided by the literature on framing and social movements. It helps explain how the deconstruction of Arab social realities was achieved through processes of meaning construction. It expounds how linguistic articulations served in voiding regime institutional facts (in the case of Egypt) and state institutional facts (in the case of Libya) from their previously recognized social statuses and functions. The concept of framing and its derivatives, on the other hand, clarify the methods applied in the course of constructing this meaning, and the means through which constructed meanings were negotiated, contested, and articulated by al-Jazeera's intellectuals. This thesis thus deploys a multi-faceted theoretical model to explain the intricate process that al-Jazeera has engaged in through its guest intellectuals to deconstruct social realities. It builds on this analysis to introduce two main theoretical contributions. The first pertains to the role that a media outlet could play - as an institutional organic intellectual – in connection to social movements, and

the second to the ability of mediated intellectual articulations to deconstruct existing social realities.

Conclusion

This chapter constructs a theoretical framework for our research. It addresses the process of framing and social reality construction through intellectual articulations on a potent media platform during the Arab popular uprisings. The chapter opens by outlining the different categories of intellectuals and their relationship with social classes and movements. The notion of organicity and the process of framing are presented to define the role of al-Jazeera's intellectuals - as individuals - and the channel - as an institution – in addition to the forms of both their engagements with the popular uprisings. The theoretical frameworks relevant to framing and social movements serve to illuminate the methods used for meaning construction and mass mobilization. Next, John Searle's account of social reality construction is introduced to relate the various forms of meaning creation to the actual dismantling of institutional facts, and the propagation of alternative political realities in the phase following the expected downfall of Arab regimes.

This theoretical framework thus associates the recreation of social realities with articulations of organic intellectuals who use language to provide facts with meaning and base their articulations on image representations of the Arab discourse. Needless to say, the social realities this research addresses are of a political nature, whereas the link it aims to draw is that relating al-Jazeera's intellectuals to the social movements calling for change. This link lies in an imagined sphere in which the audience is a group of potential political actors protesting on the ground, whereas the audience constitutes a media public that acts within the space comprising communicative and interchanging processes of social debate. In the next chapter, we introduce our first case study, Egypt, and explain how al-Jazeera contributed, through its intellectual output, to the deconstruction of the country's regime and the promotion of alternative political possibilities.

Chapter 4

Al-Jazeera's Intellectual Output and Redesigning the Egyptian Regime

This chapter explains how al-Jazeera's two regularly hosted intellectuals, Azmi Bishara and Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, combined various forms of framing in order to accent the revolutionary character of the Egyptian uprising and its pursuit of fundamental change rather than mild reform. However, the degree of change advocated by al-Jazeera's intellectuals and the means to achieve it were in need of clarification all throughout the discourse. Thus, it was necessary to define the regime whose downfall the network was propagating and to anatomize its constituting elements and distinguish them from those of the state. This chapter argues that al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals promoted the deconstruction of institutional facts legitimizing the regime, particularly the constitution, yet called for collaboration between protesters and other institutional facts that maintain the presence of the state, especially the army and judiciary, in order to achieve the social movement's desired change. It also argues that this process of meaning construction was achieved through al-Jazeera's overall output that comprised of intellectual articulations as well as a clear editorial line and around the clock coverage of events, all which rendered the channel an institutional organic intellectual bound to the class of protesting masses.

The chapter highlights al-Jazeera's engagement with the Egyptian uprising following Friday 28 January 2011. The mentioned date has been chosen as a starting point for our analysis since it marks a critical juncture in the course of Egypt's uprising (that started on 25 January 2011), after which al-Jazeera's coverage intensified and its tone clearly escalated. Our examination of the subsequent days allows for a thorough engagement with the network's output, as the latter's biases were more blatant than they had been during the first three days. The timeframe for our examination ends with

former President Hosni Mubarak stepping down and the outlet's attention shifting to other parts of the Arab World experiencing a surge in popular unrest.

Al-Jazeera interacted with protesters in Egypt all throughout their upheaval, as a giant screen broadcast the network's output to hundreds of thousands of demonstrators in Tahrir Square. This, according to *Foreign Policy,* "underscored the new reality facing Arab regimes: They no longer control the message".[197] The chapter specifically aims to analyze the network's promotion of collective action frames. Azmi Bishara's live commentaries are the main objects of interpretation in this regard, as his contributions to promoting certain frames of the uprising were presented on al-Jazeera on a daily basis. Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi's commentaries, despite their scarcity, hold high significance as well, as they offered a potent religious complement to Bishara's "scientific" intellectual engagements. However, because Bishara's output outweighed that of al-Qaradawi in terms of time on air, his commentaries are offered the bulk of this chapter's analysis.

The engagements of Bishara and al-Qaradawi with the uprising in Egypt involved various framing processes that aimed to discredit the regime's narrative and hold it responsible for the country's deteriorating political, economic, and security conditions. In their presented arguments, both intellectuals were keen on charging the whole regime rather than merely the government when assigning blame and responsibility. The strategies they proposed to counter the regime's policies and the motivational framing they presented were accompanied by various forms of frame bridging and frame disputes, the former aiming to draw parallels between the cases of Tunisia and Egypt to imply that similar preludes and contexts would lead to similar results (i.e. ousting the president), and the latter to encourage Egyptian protagonists of the uprising to engage in a full-fledged battle with the regime instead of submitting to partial or nominal solutions.

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[197]Lawrence Pintak, "The Al Jazeera Revolution," *Foreign Policy*, February 2, 2011, accessed 29 January 29, 2014. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/02/the_al_jazeera_revolution.

At some points, there seemed to be a lack of consistency regarding the event's representation. This was manifested in Bishara's usage of the term *revolution* to depict the protests very early on, and his reluctance to deploy the term when the regime seemed to be gaining momentum later. One of the reasons for this inconsistency was the fact that motivational frames require imagining and promoting the best possible scenario as a means to further inspire and incite the protesting masses, and these scenarios are sometimes exaggerated forms of the real possible solutions (the exaggerations in this regard relate to the concept of political opportunity earlier explained). Thus, the inconsistencies, albeit scarce, resulted from oscillations between the desired results and the attainable ones. Another reason was the fact that Egypt's state institutions, namely the army, did not fight the battle of preserving the president till the very end, and this had not been obvious before the last days of the uprising. Some inconsistencies were thus resultant of obscurities in identifying the institutional facts serving as antagonists of the social movement in question and that accordingly need to be challenged along with the regime's institutions in order for the social movement to achieve its goals. In this regard, one should bear in mind that there's only so much that one can speculate when in the midst of events, whereas, in retrospect, things seem much more coherent to the assessor after the events' occurrence. Hence, some discrepancies are almost an inevitable outcome of speculations regarding the evolution of social discourse. The chronological display of Bishara's commentaries that this chapter provides, despite its generally thematic approach, helps underscore the evolution of his (and al-Jazeera's) perspective on events, with all the framing processes it entailed. One should note, however, that Bishara has managed to remain rational and flexible when following up with the uprising's daily happenings and commenting on them, as he altered his tone in accordance with the evolving discourse and its changing conditions, thus maintaining his image as a credible frame articulator in the eyes of his audience.

Yet apart from the evolution of the discourse communicated through al-Jazeera, the main argument of this chapter is that both of the network's intellectuals, along with the channel as a whole, based their collective action frames on two main pillars. The first

is a call for transformative change that surpasses regime figures and governmental bodies and that targets the regime's institutional facts as a whole instead, whereas the second implicitly emphasizes the need to distinguish between the state's institutional facts and those of the regime. The latter issue was a delicate one, as it involved proposing strategies to engage with state institutions that were associated with the regime but were not integrally part of it (army and judicial authorities). This represents a major difference between the case of Egypt and that of Libya, and this difference allowed al-Jazeera and its intellectuals in the latter case (Libya) to expand their parameters of engagement as shall be discussed in our next chapter.

In the following, we start by analyzing the intellectual output of al-Jazeera (as an institution) in the case of Egypt, before moving on to anatomize the framing processes that each of its two intellectuals engaged in. This serves in contextualizing the discourse involving individual intellectual articulations and in locating it within a grander perspective. Al-Jazeera was the platform without which the interchange between its commentators and the protesting masses would not have occurred on a massive scale. It was the creator of news content and the disseminator of this content along with powerful imagery and intellectual output. These elements combined allowed the channel to perform the role of an institutional organic intellectual. We shall begin by casting light on the performance of the network as a complex generator of meaning in terms of coverage and intellectual articulations alike, regardless of the uprising's chronology. Following that, we go back to the first days of the uprising to unpack the discourse and examine the commentaries of the network's two guest intellectuals individually, in a manner that situates our thematic approach in a rough chronological order that helps the reader understand the evolution of the discourse in hand.

Al-Jazeera as an institutional organic intellectual

On Tuesday 25 January 2011, tens of thousands of Egyptians demonstrated in Cairo and various other governorates in demand for political and economic reform. Cyber activists firstly took the initiative by calling for a "Day of Rage" on this national

holiday commemorating the police. Although not licensed by the government, their call triggered unprecedented participation in comparison to all previous rallies during Mubarak's thirty-year rule.[198] Many political opposition figures joined the protests and warned of further escalation. Some even expressed a belief that the popular movement in Egypt is similar to that of Tunisia, from the very first day.[199]

Eleven days earlier, Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali was forced to step down after weeks of protests that initially erupted over corruption, unemployment, and soaring food prices. The repercussions of Tunisia's events were evident in the chants of Egypt's first demonstrators. Slogans like "thawra thawra hatta an-nasr; thawra fi Tunis; thawra fi Masr" (revolution until victory; revolution in Tunisia; revolution in Egypt)[200] and "ya Mubarak ya Mubarak; as-Su'diyya fi intizarak" (oh Mubarak, oh Mubarak; Saudi Arabia is awaiting you)[201] drew on the fresh Tunisian example that was crowned with Ben Ali's overthrow and his flee to Saudi Arabia.

The first day of rallies witnessed clashes between the police and protesters. According to the Ministry of Interior, three demonstrators and a security officer were killed,[202] whereas dozens were wounded. Yet it wasn't until Friday the 28th of January (fourth day of protests) that the trajectory of events took a serious turn, with the scope of participation vastly increasing, security conditions severely deteriorating, and numbers of casualties multiplying. On that day, and in a preemptive effort to contain the tide of

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[198]Amira Nowaira, "Egypt's Day of Rage goes on. Is the world watching?," *The Guardian*, January 27, 2011, accessed 20 Jan. 2014, accessed January 20, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/jan/27/egypt-protests-regime-citizens.

[199]"Alāf al-Miṣriyīn yahtufūn ḍid Mubārak fī yawm al-ğadab", [Thousands of Egyptians chant against Mubarak in Day of Rage] *CNN Arabi.* February 24, 2011. Accessed February 1, 2014. http://archive.arabic.cnn.com/2011/middle_east/1/25/Egypt.Protests/.

[200] Randa Ali, "Egypt's revolution continues: One chant at a time" *Ahram Online,* January 23, 2012, accessed January 28, 2014, http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/114/32335/Egypt/-January-Revolution-continues/Egypts-Revolution-continues-One-Chant-at-a-Time.aspx.

[201] "Alaf al-Misriyeen", *CNN Arabic*, February 24, 2011.

[202] "Timeline: Egypt's revolution" *Aljazeera,* February 14, 2011, accessed January 28, 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html.

protests following Friday's prayers, Egyptian authorities cut off the Internet and disrupted mobile text messages. Reports by *Agence Presse* claimed that counterterrorism forces were deployed in sensitive areas around Cairo,[203] whereas various news outlets confirmed that army troops were dispersed in several cities, yet did not engage in confrontations with protesters. By nighttime, eleven civilians were reported dead and more than a thousand wounded.[204] Several headquarters of the ruling National Party, including its main base in Cairo, were put on fire, and riots expanded to comprise all major cities, despite a curfew announced in Cairo, Alexandria, and Suez.[205] In consequence, President Mubarak issued his first televised statement since the outburst of demonstrations. He warned of a "scheme" to destabilize the country and defended his government, saying it has abided by his directives that prohibit the use of force against protesters. Nonetheless, he asked the cabinet to resign and announced that a new one shall be formed to "deal with the priorities of the new era".[206]

Following Friday's Day of Rage and President Mubarak's first statement, Egypt witnessed an escalation in events that al-Jazeera met with intense coverage and inflammatory oratory. The processes of framing and counterframing that Bishara and al-Qaradawi took part in were intrinsically linked to the network's rhetorical engagement with the Egyptian uprising. Many of the channel's reports presented critical accounts of the regime's narrative rather than merely providing "objective" coverage of events. We shall start off by exhibiting extracts from a sample report and subjecting them to brief content analysis, before we move on to analyze Bishara's and al-Qaradawi's engagements with the uprising that illuminate al-Jazeera's role as an outlet providing its viewers with an intricate form of intellectual content. The sample report was aired one day after Mubarak's second statement on the 1st of February 2011 (8th day of the

[203] Ibid.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Kassas, Jamal. "Miṣr tahtaz wa Mubārak yuhaḏḏir" [Egypt is shaking and Mubarak warns] *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ,* January 29, 2011. Accessed February 2, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com//details.asp?section=1&issueno=11750&article=605994#.UyQyBTmXJ D0.

[206] Ibid.

uprising), in which he announced that he would not be running for the next presidency and that being a candidate "had not been his intent" in the first place. Mubarak expressed his wish to work on "securing a peaceful transition of power" during the remaining months of his term, and called upon the parliament to discuss the amendment of articles 76 and 77 of the constitution, with regard to the conditions of candidature and to setting a limit to the number of presidential terms. The president also criticized the opposition "for transforming the demonstrations from a civilized form of freedom of expression to acts of vandalism against the public sector that threaten the security of the country".[207]

Displaying this report serves in showing how al-Jazeera's guest intellectuals engaged with discursive framing practices as part of a complex media production. Their engagements reinforced the channel's rationale, yet by no means were they independent of its overall output. Out of several other similar reports that were aired on al-Jazeera, this one was chosen for two main reasons. The first pertains to its length and pervasiveness, as this offers more room for analysis,[208] whereas the second relates to its considerable relevance to our point in question, as the report is meant to ridicule Mubarak's accounts of constitutional legitimacy on the one hand, and his views of the uprising on the other. There was no need for analyzing more than one sample, as the aim here is to place our following analysis of al-Jazeera's intellectual output in the context of its general editorial line, and not to analyze its reporting per se. Thus, we intend here to highlight the substantial similarity between the content and message conveyed through the report aired on the ninth day of the uprising (February 2nd) and the framing techniques principally deployed by Bishara, and to a lesser extent by al-Qaradawi.

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[207] "Al-Ra'is Mubarak: sa'atruk al-hukm.. wa lan atarashah li fatra ri'asiyya jadida" [President Mubarak: I will leave office.. and will not run for another presidential period] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 2, 2011, accessed March 17, 2014, http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11754&article=606527&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U5BpVDn7VD0.

[208] The report's length is 5 minutes and 29 seconds. This is considered long when compared to average reports usually aired on al-Jazeera, as they do not usually exceed 3 minutes of broadcast time.

Sample report:

> Had the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak had the chance, amidst his isolation and confusion, to pose a question to the demonstrators in Tahrir Square and in every Egyptian city that protested against him, perhaps the question would have been: Are you revolting before I give you permission? The President's question might be perfectly valid, as nothing has occurred in Egypt during the past thirty years without his consent. And he might even have the right to protest against them [the demonstrators]: Do I not own Egypt according to the constitution? Do I not own the parliament and control it with my party's majority? Do I not modify them both to satisfy my sincere desire to serve you, one term after the other?
> Are you replacing stability with chaos? Do you not know that I am the guarantor of Egypt's stability and its people's welfare?
> But history's open book says that the revolution is the only action that occurs against the ruler's desire and without his permission.
> Ever since the outburst of that cry calling for its downfall, the regime has been living in a state of denial. Denial took the form of lengthy silence before Mubarak decided to address the people with a speech in which he said that he's aware of the legitimate demands of the demonstrations. The verb *aware* could be associated with the verb *understand* that was used by Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali [Tunisian president] during his ordeal.
>
> But the rebels continued to protest, echoing the call once more: the people want to bring down the regime. So Mubarak presented another concession, saying that neither he nor his son want to run for the next [presidential] elections, yet he [stressed that he] wishes to fulfill his term. The protesters replied: We want you to leave.
> The President resorts to silence. So his deputy, Omar Suleiman, and his Prime Minister, Ahmad Shafik, issue statements promising further reform. This reform is under the pressure of the revolution, and it is the worst kind of reform, because it comes from people who have been forced to implement it.[209]

The report above is a demonstration of al-Jazeera's critical tone (sarcastic in this case) through which it aims to undermine Mubarak's stature and question his legitimacy as President. In its deliberately exaggerated account of reality, it aims to stress the idea that the power offered to Mubarak by the constitution is exaggerated in turn. In this

[209] "Arwa' wa-ajmal taqārīr al-jazīra 'an ṯawrat Miṣr, January 25 - 2" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kw26kXu22_I uploaded May 11, 2011, accessed November 17, 2013.

context, the constitution operates as the institutional fact that gave Mubarak his *status-function* as an ultimate ruler of the country.[210] In Searle's model of social construction, status-functions can be divided into four broad categories. The main one, which is roughly inclusive of all others and that interests us here, is that of status-functions "having deontic powers to regulate relations between people", and this includes rights, responsibilities, and obligations.[211] Mubarak's status-function that outlines his rights and responsibilities as a president with absolute powers is disparaged in this report and is rather depicted as unreasonable.

The report also mocks the regime's dichotomy of chaos versus stability, the former allegedly being the outcome of change and the latter the result of maintaining the status quo. The satire used demonstrates an implied form of counterframing, as it signifies a response to the regime's frames diagnosing the problem as that of disorder caused by protests. Frame extension is also used towards the end of the report, as the social movement in question is linked to that of Tunisia, and both regimes are diagnosed to be sharing the symptom of denial. Mubarak claimed he is "aware" of the demands of protesters in the same way his Tunisian counterpart announced that he "understands" the calls of demonstrators. Yet neither of them, according to the report, has truly grasped the essence of the social movement in question and its aspirations, as the uprising in Egypt aims to uproot the existing political order starting from its leading figure, in the same way the Tunisian one has done.

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[210] Egypt's constitution during Mubarak's rule dated back to 1971. The articles concentrating power in the hands of the president were numerous. The most notorious was Article 154 that allowed the president to declare a state of emergency "in the manner regulated by law". In practice, however, the state of emergency was extended by the parliament every three years, thus allowing the president to restrict all forms of political opposition. Furthermore, the constitution did not limit the number of presidential terms, which allowed Mubarak to renew his tenure from 1981 until his ouster 30 years later. See Egypt: Michael Meyer-Resende, "In-depth analysis of the main elements of the new constitution", Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, 5. April 2014. Accessed: May 27, 2016. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2014/433846/EXPO-AFET_NT(2014)433846_EN.pdf

[211] Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality*, 100.

Al-Jazeera's engagement in this framing process was challenged by state sponsored and regime allied Egyptian networks. Yet the channel's output vastly outweighed the latter's in terms of credibility, rendering it more capable of shaping the public sphere and impacting its general stance regarding the uprising. In principle, there are three factors that usually impact the credibility of any framing process: frame consistency, empirical credibility, and the credibility of frame articulators,[212] and in all three, al-Jazeera had the upper hand.

First, al-Jazeera's frames were relatively consistent and served the same rationale all throughout the uprising whereas those promoted by the regime along with collaborating media outlets were baffled and lacked logical rigor. The coverage of al-Mihwar, a pro-regime private outlet owned by a group of businessmen,[213] serves as a good example: During the uprising, the network changed its programs in order to "face the lies of al-Jazeera". While doing so, it accused Qatar, Iran, the United States, and Israel - all together - of aiming to destabilize Egypt, and interviewed a young woman with face obscured, "confessing" she was a foreign agent trained by Americans and Israelis in Qatar to disrupt the country's social order. Not only was it absurd to accuse a number of state actors that were literally on opposite ends of the political spectrum of collaborating to produce a "conspiracy" of that sort (Iran on the one hand, and Israel and the United States on the other) but the interviewee on al-Mihwar's "special" report confessed she had fabricated the story only few days later, after her identity got exposed.[214]

Second, the Qatari network's promoted frames had much more empirical validity than those of the Egyptian National Television and other local networks aligned with the regime. The National Television's decision to turn the blind eye to hundreds of thousands of demonstrators in Tahrir Square in the first few days proved to be of high

[212] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 619.

[213] The network's main owner, Hassan Rateb, was a member of the ruling National Democratic Party.

[214] Mohammad Abdel Rahman. "Qanāt al-Miḥwar: Kull Haḏhi al-Akāḏīb", [Al-Mihwar Channel: All These Lies] *Al-Akhbar*. 8 Feb. 2011. Accessed March 30, 2014. http://www.al- akhbar.com/node/3825.

costs. The decline in the network's credibility even pushed some of its employees to resign. One of those was a prominent anchor who said she left the studio minutes before airing, as she refused to read a bulletin that reduces the number of protestors "to less than five thousand troublemakers who were on a looting and killing spree".[215]

Third, al-Jazeera invested well in its frame articulators. Azmi Bishara and Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi were high profile guests whose output ranged from thorough intellectual analysis to potent religious incitement. This output proved to be a powerful compliment to the network's journalistic coverage of the uprising. Little wonder, then, was al-Qaradawi the first cleric to deliver a sermon on the Friday following Mubarak's downfall before tens of thousands of activists in Tahrir Square after years of exile.[216] Al-Jazeera's then reporter in Egypt Dina Samak explains that the cleric's motivational frames were so potent during the uprising that even leftist activists highly regarded them and that some went to the extent of comparing his televised messages through the network to the famous Liberation Theology endorsing leftwing social movements in Latin America.[217] This motivational role of al-Qaradawi was amplified by al-Jazeera's presenters whose questions were meant to orient the discussion towards further incitement, as in the following cases:

> (Presenter asking al-Qaradawi about his assessment of the situation: "You've seen what happened in Tunisia, and how the Tunisian people were able to change their regime in few days. Today, before this great scene in Egypt, how do you assess the current events? How do you asses this moment that the *Umma* is living in general?")
>
> Al-Qaradawi: God does not mislay the earnings of workers [cites a Quranic verse]. The blood of those who left their homes sacrificing themselves and holding on till the last moment cannot go in vain. This does not get wasted. This is great work. And this proves the [nature] of the pharaonic *taghouti* Egyptian regime. [The regime] could have shown

[215] Salah Abdel Maqsoud, "Egypt's Media Revolution", *The Guardian*, February 15, 2011.

[216] David Kirkpartrick, "After Long Exile, Sunni Cleric Takes Role in Egypt," *The New York Times,* February 18, 2011, accessed July 12, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/19/world/middleeast/19egypt.html?_r=0.

[217] Interview with al-Jazeera reporter Dina Samak.

> understanding regarding the demands of these young people. It could have listened to them and gotten closer to them. Instead, it closed its ears. I always think of these regimes as blind that do not see, deaf that do not hear, and stupid that do not understand [cites a Quranic verse].
>
> There is a proverb in Egypt that says "make more scandals while you leave". Those [i.e. the regime] are leaving and are causing more scandals on their way. It is known that God almighty gives respite but never neglects. I am positive that those youngsters will triumph and that the [regime] will be beaten.
>
> (Presenter asks about the meaning of victory in Egypt)
>
> Al-Qaradawi: Victory in Egypt means the removal of Mubarak, his regime, his thoughts...
>
> (Presenter interrupts to ask about the impact of that on the Umma)
>
> The impact on the Umma is all good. This regime has retarded Egypt politically, economically, and socially...[218]

This excerpt demonstrates the role of al-Jazeera's presenters in outlining the discourse that their guest, Youssef al-Qaradawi, engages in. The questions that presenter Ali al-Dafiri poses are reflective of the network's editorial policies regarding the uprising, and the terms he uses serve in amplifying the Sheikh's framing of the discourse. Al-Dafiri's portrayal of the uprising as a "great" event and his deployment of terms carrying religious significance, like Umma, reinforce his guest's depictions and enhance the motivational framing that the latter presents. The term Umma, for instance, delineates the ideological framework of the discussion above. It depicts the social movement in question as transcendent of Arab state borders, thus introducing a form of frame extension.

Al-Qaradawi's proponents and religious descendants have described him as *Sheikh al-Umma*, or the "Sheikh of the whole Muslim community".[219] His stature as one of the most prominent religious scholars in the Islamic World has given him an

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[218] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Al-Qaraḍāwī Ṯawrat Miṣr" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op3PmVdhSYU uploaded February 7, 2011, accessed May 8, 2014.

[219] Skovgaard-Petersen, "Yūsuf al- Qaradāwī and al-Azhar", in *Global Mufti*, 51.

overarching influence on Muslim populations around the globe. This impact was rather enhanced due to his dynamic understanding of Islam, for he thinks of the *ulama* (religious scholars) as reliable for "preserv(ing) the belief of the Umma unified and coherent".[220] The Umma is the community of Muslim believers, a term with religious implications that dates back to the birth of Islam. It is thought to be a platform for action for all devout Muslims. In this excerpt, al-Qaradawi is indirectly asked to stretch the meanings and themes of the event in Egypt to other realms of the Umma, particularly the Arab part of it. This, as abovementioned, serves as an extension of the framing process.

Al-Qaradawi's motivational framing is evident in his deterministic tone that shall further be discussed in the following excerpts. The certainty in which he expresses his speculations regarding the "triumph of protesters" is meant to boost the morale of those who highly regard him. His continuous reference to the supernatural (example: God almighty gives respite but never forgets) is yet another investment in the religious leverage he has on wide Muslim sectors. In his diagnosis of the issue in hand, al-Qaradawi blames the regime and its head, President Hosni Mubarak, demeaning both and holding them responsible for "retarding Egypt" on all levels. Al-Qaradawi invests in Quranic descriptions and analogues in his diagnostic framing, as he accuses the regime of being *taghouti* and pharaonic**.** Taghout (adjective taghouti) is an Arabic term often used in the Quran referring to the oppressor, those who have crossed the limits, or those who are worshiped instead of God. It is deployed here along with another description of religious significance and symbolic relevance - that which relates Mubarak to ancient Pharaohs who have ruled Egypt and were mentioned in Islamic holy texts as examples of oppressors on multiple occasions.

The framing processes that al-Qaradawi engaged in were thus part of al-Jazeera's overall output. His contributions were an amplifier of the network's narrative construction and an inciter of further mass mobilization. The previous excerpt exhibits the complementary role of al-Jazeera's presenters in accenting religious sentiments for

[220] Ibid, 101.

motivational purposes and in outlining the course of discussion in a way that best serves these purposes. In a different commentary, few days later, al-Qaradawi was even left to cite a prayer on air, asking God to support "those who are protesting against the ruler". He similarly referred to Quranic narratives highlighting the example of the Pharaoh subjugating his people. The presenter, who happened to be al-Dafiri as well, commented on the Sheikh's litany saying "it directly reaches all those who have led the protests in Egypt", and, in a statement meant to address religious convictions and assert al-Qaradawi's prayer, added that "no barriers exist between earth and the heavens these days".[221]

The intellectual contributions of Azmi Bishara, on the other hand, banked on al-Jazeera's daily broadcast of events and enhanced the quality of meaning construction that the network was offering to its audience. On multiple occasions, he asserted that the outlet's broadcast material provides him as well as other protagonists of Egypt's social movement with essential means to discredit the regime's narrative. His contribution on the last day of the uprising, for example, emphasized al-Jazeera's role - as an institution - in constructing a maverick narrative, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

> Bishara: We had the chance to sit here, help in analyzing events, and further direct the Arab public opinion. We hope we've [had] the same [effect on] the Egyptian public opinion. Al-Jazeera has allowed this opportunity. Thanks to you, this was done. Not every place allows for a rational analysis to take place in such circumstances.
>
> First, let's assert that the revolution has achieved what it aimed for, i.e. negating the existing. It hasn't crystallized yet what has to be. The first phase is the revolution. The second is what ought to be, and this requires an agreement on the practical principles of a democratic transformation that sets its own laws and acquires the consent of everyone, regardless of ideologies… There is also the issue of purging institutions, not necessarily of people but of the mentalities, the culture, and the values that were predominant, and this needs a long time.

[221] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Al-Qaraḍāwī Ṯawrat Miṣr" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rk89eAS3MdY uploaded February 7, 2011, accessed May 5, 2014.

> I believe that the first day witnessed an *uprising*. We sat here and used words like *revolution* and *rebels*, whereas, in fact, it was an uprising against injustice. It began changing into a revolution from the second day on, after it had introduced [the demand for] overthrowing the regime. When a popular movement introduces [the demand for] overthrowing a regime, and when it's simultaneous and popular in the way we've seen, we should pause [to reflect]… So we paused and said this is a revolution and should be treated as such, even if those taking part in it do not recognize that.[222]

On the seventeenth day of the uprising, one day before his downfall, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak delegated his constitutional powers to his deputy Omar Suleiman and asserted his intention to execute a package of reforms in conformity with popular demands.[223] Suleiman, on the other hand, asked the protesters to "return home" and promised to "maintain the youth revolution and its accomplishments".[224] However, it was too late for any vows to make an impact on protesting masses. The latter were already preparing for their million-man march to the presidential palace on the day to follow, as tens of thousands assembled on the route to Mubarak's residence more than twenty hours in advance.[225] Meanwhile, the army gave its first sign of abandoning the president, as the Supreme Council for the Armed Forces (SCAF) headed by Minister of Defense Hussein Tantawi issued a statement asserting its recognition of popular

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[222] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-18 .., yawm al-naṣr .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NeO8Rn9XrFM February 11, 2011, accessed December 10, 2013.

[223] "Al-Jayš yu'ayyid maṭālib al-šaʻb al-mašrūʻa", [The army acknowledges the "legitimate demands" of the people] *al-Sharq al-Awsat.* February 11, 2011. Accessed June 9, 2014. http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11763&article=607805&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U63dAzmXJD0.

[224] "Sleiman fī bayān: ataʻahhada bi-l-ḥifāẓ ʻalā ṯawrat al-šabāb" [Sleiman in a statement: I commit to maintain the revolution of the youth] February, 11 2011. Accessed June 9, 2014. http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11763&article=607806&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U63dDjmXJD0.

[225] "Al-jayš al-Miṣrī yuqniʻ ālāf al-mutaẓāhirīn bī-fak ḥiṣārihim li-l-maqar al-tārīkhī li-l-qaṣr al-ri'asī", [Egyptian army convince thousands of protesters to break siege on presidential palace] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 11, 2011. Accessed 10 June, 2014. http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11763&article=607810&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U63dHDmXJD0.

demands and declaring it will remain in permanent session.[226] The army's shifting stance vastly accelerated the process of the uprising: On the eighteenth and last day, Deputy President Omar Suleiman announced Mubarak's resignation and his decision to assign the SCAF to "manage the country's affairs", whereas the latter issued two more statements, one of which hailed the "martyrs who have sacrificed their lives during the protests".[227]

The relationship between the regime and the military, the latter being the state's most powerful institutional fact, had been problematic for years. Various indicators suggested a growing rift between the two regarding the issue of Tawreeth (Mubarak's son succeeding him in power), at a time when Mubarak's son, Gamal, was gradually gaining power in the ruling National Democratic Party. In September 2010, four and a half months prior to the outburst of the uprising, *The New York Times* alleged army officers were expressing concerns that "Gamal Mubarak might erode the military's institutional powers", adding that "much of the military's distrust of [Mubarak's son] stems from his ties to a younger generation of ruling party cadres who have made their fortunes in the business world", whereas the military "is tied to the National Democratic Party's old guard".[228] One month later, the intelligence firm Stratfor quoted sources saying that commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army Mohammed Hussein Tantawi expressed his opposition of succession "on behalf of the military" and "reminded Mubarak that the army supported him and his predecessors because they were members

[226] "Naṣṣ al-bayān raqam 1 li-l-majlis al-aʿlā li-l-quwwāt al-musallaḥa al-miṣrīya" [Statement number one of the Supreme Council of the Egyptian Armed Forces] February 11, 2011. Accessed June 10, 2014. http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11763&article=607808&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U63dFTmXJD0.

[227] "Wa faʿal-hā al-šabāb… Tanaḥā Mubārak" [And the youth did it… Mubarak resigned] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 12, 2011. Accessed June 10, 2014. http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=1&issueno=11764&article=607985&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U63cDDmXJD0.

[228] Mona El-Naggar, "Succession gives army a stiff test in Egypt", *The New York Times*, September 11, 2010.

of the armed forces".[229] Two months after (and one month prior to the uprising), cables released by Wikileaks uncovered US doubts regarding the ability of Mubarak to convince the army of the option of succession. Former American ambassador in Cairo Francis Ricciardone was cited saying, "A key stumbling block for a Gamal candidacy could be the military".[230] This deviance between the army and the President illustrates the difference between the state's institutional facts and those of the regime. Egypt's military, like its judiciary (as shall later be shown), did not completely adhere to the country's regime policies albeit being the corner stone of the regime's security.

Bishara's commentary came within a context in which Egypt's uprising successfully reached its desired end after the army declared a neutral stance. In the excerpt above, he illuminates the complementary role that he played, as a class-bound intellectual analyzing daily events and commenting on them, on the one hand, along with al-Jazeera, the media platform that has allowed him to communicate with its audience, on the other. The "rational analysis" that he hopes to have presented was delivered to protesting activists in Tahrir Square through a giant screen displaying al-Jazeera's coverage. This coverage included airing footage that comprised of material provided by citizen journalists, testimonials of activists, standpoints of political opposition figures, and interpretations of casual as well as regular commentators (Bishara and al-Qaradawi). This intricate process of meaning construction presented a powerful and persuasive end product to millions of spectators in Egypt, of which at least hundreds of thousands were active on the ground.[231]

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[229] "Complications with Egypt's Succession Plan", Stratfor Global Intelligence, October 11, 2010. https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/complications-egypts-succession-plan.

[230] "Army 'could block' Egypt succession", *Al Jazeera*, December 15, 2010. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2010/12/201012158103985404.html.

[231] Al-Jazeera's reporter in Egypt during the uprising, Dina Samak, describes in a personal interview how the channel's impact on protesters and lively interplay with them, especially in Cairo's Tahrir Square, was evident to all those who had the chance to visit the place. This interplay created a sort of "alliance" between the network and protesters. In this context, for example, she narrates that, whenever al-Jazeera's satellite transmission got disrupted by Egypt's authorities, protesters would roam around the square carrying banners that enlist the network's new frequencies.

The abovementioned matrix allowed Bishara to promote alternative political possibilities all throughout the uprising. On the last day, as the extract shows, Bishara explains his belief that the uprising has "achieved what it aimed for", and that is "negating the existing". However, he stresses that it hasn't crystallized an alternative yet. In Searle's model of interpretation, "negating the existing" is equivalent to deconstructing existing institutional facts, whereas "crystallizing what ought to be" pertains to constructing alternative ones. Bishara accents, however, that this creation of a new social order requires time, as it involves attaining the consent of all social sectors, regardless of their diverging ideologies. Put differently, a collective intentionality was needed to impose a new set of status-functions on the newly emerging social facts.

Bishara's frame articulations, as well as al-Qaradawi's, in addition to their calls to deconstruct existing institutional facts and their promotion of others, were part of al-Jazeera's overall output. The Qatari network acted as an institutional organic intellectual, as the meaning construction it presented was resultant of a complex matrix of intellectual communication and audiovisual transmissions, all promoting collective action frames in favor of the social movement calling for political change in Egypt. Towards the end of the excerpt above, Bishara refers to his account of the upsurge as a revolution, and through a brief frame articulation, he explains how the protesters' demands have shifted from reform to fundamental change, thus giving what first began as an uprising calling for limited alterations within the regime a revolutionary character whose aim is to establish a new social order. The rest of this chapter shall extensively explain how this evolution in demands has occurred following the Day of Rage, and how al-Jazeera's intellectuals, precisely Bishara, engaged with this discourse, as the uprising expanded and advanced.

The social movement calls for change, not reform

On the fifth day of demonstrations, one day after Friday's Day of Rage, Bishara presented thorough analysis of the underlying meanings of Egypt's protests. He distinguished between the performance of "spontaneous" demonstrators and that of

organized opposition factions, deeming the latter as hesitant and as late responders to the widespread popular urge to uproot the existing order of power relations. Bishara's analysis came with the growing popular need to define the uprising's aims and to clarify its future possibilities. It was part of the effort made by the social movement's protagonists to face the regime's attempts to absorb the social movement and moderate its demands.

Regarding the state's power structures, Bishara emphasized the idea that the regime had reached a point where it lost the ability to maintain its mere existence, and that the extent of expected change had surpassed all its tactical attempts to maneuver and to circumvent the powerful popular discourse. Based on that, he critically engaged with the rhetoric presented by opposition factions, as he thought they were short of capturing the moment and expanding the limits of political demands:

> Bishara: This is the moment that political forces should seize. Up until yesterday, the demands of these forces were less than those of the masses. The streets were calling for the downfall of the regime, whereas some parties were calling on Mubarak to change his government...
>
> (Breaking news displayed: Omar Suleiman appointed as Vice President)
>
> (Commenting on the breaking news) I think this is meant to absorb the anger. He [i.e. Mubarak] is now saying there shall be no *Tawreeth.* This is also meant to be a message for the West revealing [Mubarak's] willingness to step down and [affirming] that his replacement belongs to the camp that maintains peace with Israel… I think the issue of Tawreeth was over the moment the masses took the streets simultaneously, in numerous cities, vast in number, and [their movement] sustained its permanence. It is no more an issue of Tawreeth now. It is that of the regime's future.
>
> Alternative political parties should propose an alternative political agenda so that the debate does not revolve around individuals. The latter is not the [real] question because the replacement could come from within the regime and adopt the same policies… The demands should be of a political/constitutional nature, ones that the regime cannot absorb by appointing a deputy or through nominal changes pertaining to certain individuals.

(Presenter asking Bishara to comment on news about Mubarak's sons leaving the country)

Bishara: We can summarize the last four days as follows: The regime's first pillar, i.e. the ruling family, is over. The second pillar, i.e. the National Party, I believe, is over as well. In other words, [the National Party] shall return to its normal size - as a small party that is - if it were to survive in the first place, as this is the party of state employees, interests, and businessmen. What remains is the security apparatus.

It should be born in mind that the regime is a cluster of forces and intertwined complexities: [First, there are] the circles surrounding the ruling family and old politicians, like Safwat al-Shereef, Zakaria Azmi, and others. Then you have the party, then the security. As for the businessmen, they will side with the next regime in order to sustain their businesses.[232]

In the excerpt above, Bishara engages in a frame dispute with Egyptian opposition figures advocating the social movement in question. He frames "the demands of the masses" as "calls for the downfall of the regime", and contrasts them to those of "some parties" that limit their goals to a mere change in government.[233] Framing popular demands as calls for the downfall of the regime serves in drawing a clear-cut distinction between calls for "reform", that he believes are ostensible, and calls for radical change, that he deems necessary. This is explained by his insistence that the demands "should be of a political/constitutional nature".

A *frame dispute*, as defined by Benford, is an intramovement framing contest or a "dispute over reality" between the adherents of the same social movement.[234] In this case, Bishara's critique of the performance of opposition figures illustrates a framing contest within the anti-regime milieu. His critical reference to traditional opposition factions serves in underscoring their propensity to submit to the regime's framing of Egypt's political situation. Moreover, it suggests that their demand for a change in

[232] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-ḫāmis .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLksSzzPHfc uploaded January 31, 2011, accessed November 10, 2013.

[233] In parallel to choosing Suleiman as his deputy, Mubarak appointed Minister of Civil Aviation in the former government, Ahmad Shafik, as head of the new government.

[234] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 626.

government does not defer much from the president's appointment of a deputy: they are both insignificant adjustments that do not alter the regime's ruling power structures. Consequently, they both serve in rejuvenating the regime and polishing its image, thus helping it maintain its existence instead of undergoing substantial transformations in structure and identity.

In the course of this framing dispute, Bishara presents a form of diagnostic framing as he interprets the situation in hand. By emphasizing that the "debate shouldn't revolve around individuals", he identifies the problematic condition in need for remedy: the problem does not lie in some of the regime's second-class personnel, but in the regime itself, as an oligarchic hierarchy, a matrix of power relations, and a platform legitimizing certain decision-making processes. This diagnosis delineates the defining lines of the *revolution*, a term that was extensively used in Bishara's commentaries and al-Jazeera's reports, as shall later be demonstrated. The diagnostic framing thus aims to identify the enemy as the *regime* rather than certain individual officials, or as Bishara explains, the "cluster of forces" comprising various circles of power and interest. This identification serves in highlighting the battle-lines in this discourse and clarifying the end goals of the social movement as well as the political translation of its rhetorical demands.

The frame dispute that Bishara engages in also involves a refutation of the regime's rationale. As previously stated, the "real question", according to al-Jazeera's guest, is of a "constitutional nature". This account entails dismissing the regime's framing of the problem, in which it merely stresses the need for minimal alterations in the configuration of its ruling elites. Bishara accuses Egypt's ruling elites of deploying illusive tactics to manipulate the popular discourse and reorient its trajectory towards different ends, as he explains that "the replacement could come from within the regime and adopt the same policies". In the course of refuting its frames, Bishara also tries to uncover the underlying motives behind the regime's rhetorical allegations. In this regard, he claims that the president aims to bargain "mild reform" for "guaranteeing the security of Israel", in order to legitimize his regime's permanence in the eyes of the "West".

Following this line of argument, al-Jazeera's guest stresses that the issue in question is that of the regime's future and mere existence. Accordingly, the appointment of General Omar Suleiman (head of Military Intelligence) as Vice President aims to absorb the momentum of popular protests and hamper the conditions for their growth and evolution. In other words, the regime's steps are framed as defensive acts that aim to sustain its legitimacy. Underscoring this defensive nature fuels the assumption that the regime is weakening and is, thus, more susceptive to retreat. This interpretation, in turn, serves in the construction of motivational frames that encourage further escalation. Bishara's mention of a "moment that political forces should seize" fits this description. It constitutes a "call for arms", as it constructs propelling vocabulary of motive and incites the opposition to invest in the popular discourse and take advantage of the regime's weakness.

In the course of his argument, al-Jazeera's intellectual also presents a brief anatomy of the regime's power structures. To Bishara, those structures are the targets of change desired by the sweeping majority of protesting masses. His emphasis on the need to induce constitutional amendments presents an early suggestion that the uprising should primarily aim to disarm the regime of its legitimacy. The regime, according to Bishara, is founded on three main pillars: the ruling family, the National Party, and the security apparatus. Bishara asserts that the first pillar (Mubarak's family) has fallen due to the regime's proposed concessions regarding Tawreeth. To a lesser extent, this also applies to the National Party, as the latter is expected to automatically shrink when state employees (approximated by six million) are freed from the pressures of the existing clientalistic infrastructure, and when businessmen reestablish their interests in accordance with the new system of power relations.

In short, Bishara believes that dismantling the regime's power structures requires producing change of a constitutional nature. In Searle's paradigm of socially constructed realities, the constitution is the institutional fact that offers the regime its legitimacy. This is its agentive function. On the other hand, its status, as a constitution - with the authority that this status entails - was acquired through collective intentionality (or social

acceptance). Bishara (as does al-Jazeera's other guest, al-Qaradawi, on later occasions) aims to discredit the regimes' accounts claiming that this acceptance is based on free will. He is rather keen on emphasizing that social acceptance had been obtained through coercive practices that the regime had exercised throughout its rule. In order to amplify this account, he engages in a process of counterframing, in which he opposes the regime's narrative and framing of events. This shall be scrutinized and subject to further elaboration in the course of our chapter's analysis. We next present another excerpt from the following day, in which the question of what makes the movement a revolution is presented.

What makes it a *revolution*?

The sixth day of protests witnessed further escalation by the state in parallel to its governmental change. The crackdown of protests resulted in scores of casualties (more than 150 deaths and 2000 injuries).[235] In response, groups of activists in Tahrir Square issued a declaration that called for drafting a new constitution and electing "a legitimate president",[236] whereas others went further in their demands, as they called for banning the National Party and prosecuting its leaders along with the security officers responsible for killing demonstrators.[237]

Al-Jazeera was a target of this escalation as well. Egypt's Ministry of Information issued a decision to close the network's bureau in Cairo, revoke its license, cut off its access to the state owned satellite, NileSat, and ban its employees from

[235] "Miṣr: 150 qatīlan wa-alfā jarīḥ fī l-yawm al-khamīs li-l-muẓāharāt" [Egypt: 150 dead and 2000 wounded in fifth day of protests], *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* January 30, 2011. Accessed March 1, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11751&article=606056&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U4HQ6DmXJD0.

[236] "Al-muʿāraḍa tarfuḍ al-Barādʿī wa-l-muẓāharāt mustamirra", [The opposition rejects al-Baradei and the protests continue] *al-Sharq al-Awsat.* January 31, 2011. Accessed 1 March 1, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11752&article=606201&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U4HQlzmXJD0.

[237] Ibid.

working in the country.[238] Albeit of limited effect due to the network's broadcast on other satellite providers (Saudi-based Arabsat and France-based Hot Bird), these retaliatory acts revealed the government's concern regarding al-Jazeera's impact on the popular discourse.

In this context, Azmi Bishara engaged in promoting prognostic frames, as he proposed strategies for dealing with the situation in hand. Banking on fresh news from Tahrir Square regarding the activists' high morale, Bishara stressed the opposition's need to agree on "a clear and decisive political project after debating it amongst its constituents", one that is up to the expectations of young protesters who "don't want to go home without an accomplishment" (see below). For that, he urged for the creation of a communicative body whose role is to mediate between governing elites, the army, and protesters in order to reach a settlement regarding a transitional phase. Bishara's emphasis on the need to establish a body representing the uprising's standpoint was accompanied with advice regarding the forms of communication with existing state bureaucracies and the nature of demands that ought to be proposed to each (such as the need to differentiate between the way to address the judicial body and that of addressing the army). Bishara's prognostic framing was thus dependent on his differentiation between the state's institutional facts. His promoted version of change was inclusive of the president, the government, the parliament, the National Party (as a clientalistic infrastructure), the security apparatus, and, ultimately, the constitution – the latter being the primary institutional fact legitimizing all others. Those, in his former statement, were identified as the main pillars of the regime (financial elites were excluded as they were thought to be willing to side by the winner in any case). The judicial and military bodies – both being institutional facts functioning within the governing system of power relation - were not included in Bishara's definition of regime institutions in need for change or deconstruction (they were rather identified as state institutions). In the following excerpt, however, the main issue that Bishara engages in is that of defining the popular upsurge: Is it a revolution? And what makes it one? The answer to this question

[238] "Waqf Qanāt Al Jazeera" [Al-Jazeera banned] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* January 31, 2011.

helps in further clarifying Bishara's diagnostic framing of the *regime* as the social movement's antagonist. It also serves in providing counterframes to the regime's narrative and, thus, in discrediting its allegations.

> Bishara: There are two definitions of the *opposition* at this point. The first pertains to the popular opposition on the streets. This has been given many [condescending] descriptions, yet I believe it represents the full spectrum of the Egyptian people. There are men and women. There are the employed and the unemployed. There are [those who come from] the middle, upper, and lower classes of society. There are the religious and the non-religious. There are Muslims and Christians despite all the conspiracies aiming to sow the seeds of discord between Egyptians. I believe that we have an authentic popular revolution that emulates the great revolutions of the world because it is simultaneous, extensive, and representative of the whole Egyptian spectrum. Had it not been so, it would have failed.
>
> We've been through a depressing era in the Arab World, one that seemed to have no horizon. President Mubarak, for instance, is one of this period's representatives. Regardless of what could be said about his pros and cons, it is of no doubt that he came to power by mere coincidence, and that someone who came by coincidence should not remain there for thirty years, especially that he had no charisma nor competence nor a vision nor projects, and we've seen [how bad] his foreign policy [was]…
>
> The opposition must agree on a [unified] political project. This should be debated amongst all its constituents. The project should be clear and decisive, because those youngsters that you see do not want to go back home without an accomplishment… There ought to be a leadership with a [clear] political stance. It should not yield and should know how to address [others]. For example, the judges aren't supposed to be addressed in the same way the army is… There should exist a mediator that can communicate with the governing elites as well as with the masses and the army so that a transition occurs. It is necessary to create this body now and agree on it.
>
> (Presenter asking about the availability of a mediator and the possibility of choosing a figure to negotiate with the government)
>
> Bishara: It seems we have to get used to something new in our modern world: revolutions with no leader. I think we hang on [to leaders] because we're used to dictatorships and autocratic regimes. The revolution did not produce a leader. There is a group of leaders. The people led themselves with a great self-regulatory power, and then came political elites. In

> Tunisia, we are now witnessing a process of *bargaining* [term used in English] with political elites. You [i.e. the leaders] represent us [i.e. the masses] but there are certain conditions that you have to fulfill. So the starting point was to refuse an individual form of representation: no more unconditional charisma, no more charming leaders that we submit to as we had done during the revolutions of the 1950s. This is over.[239]

In the abovementioned, Bishara's definition of the popular opposition is meant to counter regime frames that aim to tarnish and discredit the popular movement in Egypt. The movement that has been portrayed in negative light is *authentic,* according to Bishara. It is highly representative, as it comprises diverse communal strata: the activists are from both genders, belong to different social classes, include the working and unemployed, and have various religious (or non-religious) identities.

Two days earlier, President Mubarak warned of a plot to destabilize the country. Public television, along with several private networks owned by pro-regime businessmen, engaged in a campaign that aimed to undermine the movement's significance, void it from serious political meaning, reduce the participation in it to certain factions, and raise skepticism regarding its "real aims". Attempts to disparage the movement were evident on National Television, as the latter quoted "security sources" on Friday's "Day of Rage" saying there is "no need to be bothered and misled by rumors and media exaggerations".[240] The network focused its coverage on riots resulting from security vacuum, and refrained from reporting on mass protests.[241] In terms of reducing the movement to certain factions, pro regime media echoed statements by the Ministry of Interior, that primarily blamed the Muslim Brotherhood for catalyzing protests, and to

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[239] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-sādis .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZAERFitjjA uploaded January 31, 2011, accessed November 12, 2013.

[240] "Muẓāharāt al-ğaḍab tahuz Miṣr" [The demonstrations of rage shake Egypt] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* January 29, 2011. Accessed February 5, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11750&article=605966&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U4HRBjmXJD0.

[241] "Waqf Qanāt Al Jazeera ʻan al-ʻamal fi Miṣr wa-qatīh baṯihā ʻalā Nāilisāt" [Al Jazeera banned from work in Egypt and the channel's signal cut on Nilesate] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* January 31, 2011. Accessed February 10, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11752&article=606185&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U4HQWjmXJD0.

a lesser extent the "6th of April Movement" and the "National Association for Change" lead by Nobel Peace laureate and former head of UN's nuclear watchdog Mohammad el-Baradei.[242]

In the course of countering the regime's narrative, Bishara frames the popular movement as a revolution. He identifies some defining features that render it as such: it is highly representative, extensive, and simultaneous. The elements aforementioned serve in distinguishing the case of protests calling for minor reforms from that of a revolution whose goal is to substantially transform the system of existing power relations. Bishara aims to assert that the movement is inclusive of various social constituents and that it transcends their defining borderlines.

Bishara's framing of the movement as a revolutionary one is thus based on the movement's characteristic features. This, in itself, is quite controversial, because events are generally labeled as revolutions due to their consequences rather than certain defining elements. According to Jeff Goodwin, a revolution "denotes a relatively rapid process in which a society's state structure, economic institutions, and transnational relations are fundamentally transformed; these changes, furthermore, are initiated and/or propelled, at least in part, by mass mobilizations, including armed movements, strikes, and/or demonstrations".[243] This definition, much like many others in theories of revolution, focuses on the outcomes instead of the features defining the processual phenomenon in question, albeit elucidating the process itself.

The case of Egypt is particularly problematic because it was labeled a revolution very early on. Historian Joel Beinin, for instance, refrains from terming it as such, as he doesn't think its outcomes had been transformative.[244] In his contribution on the

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[242] "3 tayyārāt tataṣāra'a 'alā al-šāri' al-Miṣrī" [Three streams competing on the Egypt street] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* January 30, 2011. Accessed February 10, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11751&article=606010&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U4H0ZTmXIfF.

[243] Jeff Goodwin, "Old Regimes and Revolutions in the Second and Third Worlds: A Comparative Perspective", *Social Science History* 18 (1994), 577.

[244] Brecht De Smet, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt", *Science and Society* 87 (2014), 11.

Egyptian uprising, De Smet explains that Beinin's "consequential historical perspective echoed Theda Skocpol's classical definition of a revolution as a process that entailed rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures". Accordingly, a process "can only be discerned as a revolution post factum*"*. De Smet adds that protagonists, not social scientists, were the ones who defined the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings as revolutions, and that, by doing so, have shifted "the focus of analysis from outcomes to agencies".[245] This is mainly due to the protagonists' engagement in motivational framing, as their account of the event as such would give further incentive to protesters to fulfill the requirements of a revolution and accordingly reconfigure the structure of power relations. In Social Movement Theory, Gamson and Meyer expressed this idea by saying that if "movement activists interpret political space in ways that emphasize opportunity rather than constraint, they may stimulate actions that change opportunity, making their opportunity frame a self-fulfilling prophecy".[246]

Further research, however, shows that Bishara's viewpoint overlaps with some observations and accounts of previous revolutions. In *Theorizing Revolutions,* John Foran, for instance, examines the discourses and social forces on several revolutionary platforms. In the course of his study, he stresses that the revolutions of Eastern Europe in 1989 "consisted of mass demonstrations by men and women across all classes, no more accepting the legitimacy of the state".[247] This account is substantially similar to Bishara's emphasis on the element of representation in Egypt's mass movement - that which allowed for its definition as a revolution.

Bishara's labeling of the movement as a *revolution* aims to accent its transformative character. Again, this helps in bolstering his vision of change as a fundamental one that stretches out to the cluster of forces and interests governing Egypt's political platform. The comparison he draws between the case of Egypt and that

[245] Ibid, 11-12.

[246] Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 628.

[247] John Foran, *Theorizing Revolutions*, ed. John Foran (New York: Routledge, 1997), 206.

of Tunisia serves the same purpose, as it implies that both social movements operate within similar contexts and are bound to achieve similar goals. Bishara's reference to the Tunisian uprising when assessing the absence of leading figures in the Egyptian upheaval is a form of frame bridging or a frame alignment process.

Frame bridging refers to the "linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem. It can occur between a movement and individuals, or across social movements".[248] Bishara's comparison between the two cases aims to draw a link across two distinct social movements having similar political claims. A central political theme of both movements, according to Bishara, relates to their detachment from individual forms of leadership. This is part and parcel of the activists' rejection of autocratic regimes, as both (existing regimes and the individual leadership of revolutions) reduce representations to mere idiosyncracies. The alternative mode of conduct that expresses itself in the form of protests in open spaces is one that conforms to political agendas rather than submitting to unconditional individual charisma. This is why, according to this account, both "revolutions did not produce a leader". Instead, they had "a group of leaders", or "people with a great self-regulatory power".

Bishara's intellectual output on a potent media platform was meant to provide Egypt's social movement with supporting frames. As previously explained, his outreach to millions of spectators through al-Jazeera elevated his status as an influential protagonist of the social movement in question. The collective action frames that he and others presented were forms of representational intellectual participation. In the case of Egypt, their primary goal soon crystallized in the form of calls for ousting the president Hosni Mubarak.

[248] Benford & Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 624.

The regime retreating: aim at the President!

The seventh day of protests witnessed a shift in the approach of state sponsored media regarding the inflammatory events. Government newspapers blamed former Minister of Interior (in the dissolved government) Habib el-Adli, a leading figure in the ruling National Party, for failing to adequately deal with the situation. In parallel, the parliament affirmed it will submit to court verdicts annulling the victory of several of its members,[249] the vast majority of whom were members of Mubarak's National Democratic Party.[250] Bishara's following reference to the regime's "retreats" relates to this context. The withdrawal of Tawreeth, the appointment of a Vice President, the dissolution of the government, and the willingness to accept annulments in the parliament were all signs of a weakening regime.

> Bishara: I think we have entered a phase that all revolutions go through, a phase where the regime starts to retreat whereas the revolution begins to progress. The day before yesterday, we saw a withdrawal of Tawreeth and an appointment of a Vice President. Today, another series of retreats have begun regarding the Parliament and otherwise.
>
> The issue now is who should be entrusted with the transitional period. Of course, former elites should be included, like parts of the political institution, the judiciary system, and the army. But the demonstrators in the streets must be part of [the process] as well, as they take credit for stirring the whole issue in the first place.

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[249] "Al-ṣuḥuf al-miṣrīya tuġayyir lawnaha... Intaqadat al-'Ādilī wa-adā' al-dākhilīya", [Egyptian newspapers change their color... They criticized al-Adili and the Ministry of Interior's performance] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 1, 2011. Accessed March 10, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11753&article=606385&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U49p3Tn7VD0.

[250] Contrary to previous terms where the opposition was represented in the parliament (sometimes symbolically), this one was overwhelmingly dominated by the National Democratic Party with hardly any room for even "independent" voices. Apart from the 2010 elections that resulted in this sweeping and orchestrated triumph of the NDP (more than 96% whereas most of the remaining were "independent"), the opposition in Egypt had generally been able to access the parliament during Mubarak's rule with varying degrees. In 2005, for example, 100 opposition candidates were elected out of 454, 88 of them were members of the Muslim Brotherhood. See Jack Shenker, "Egypt's Rulers Tighten Grip Amid Claims of Election Fraud and Intimidation", *the Guardian*, November 30, 2010. Accessed May 25, 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/nov/30/egypt-poll-electoral-fraud-claims

> There's [a process of] *shifting* [term used in English], a continuous dynamic process, and the [standpoint of the] army is transforming in accordance with it because it wishes to preserve the country… If the masses' movement becomes directed against Omar Suleiman, this will drive the army to lower its demands until we reach the phase necessary to preserve the country's security, and I think this [is represented by] a transformative democratic process secured by the army.
>
> (Presenter: Could there be blood baths when the demonstrators approach the Presidential Palace?)
>
> Bishara: When a million demonstrate, it's over. Guns will fall silent. Everyone will as well… The army is part of the people. It made it clear that it will not shoot at the people and it's clear that this is a green light for a million to demonstrate.[251]

Basing on the influx of political developments, Bishara presents a prognostic framing whereby he proposes a strategy to engage with the army's "shifting" stance towards the upheaval. According to him, the army wishes to maintain the country's stability and, for that purpose, is aiming to formulate an understanding with international players that share with it the same goal. If the movement's demands become directed against the newly appointed Vice President, Omar Suleiman, the army will then have to bear in mind that its acceptance of Suleiman's persistence in power will higher the stakes of further instability. A popular pressure in the direction of refuting Suleiman's mandate will propel the army to redesign its policy in accordance with the demands of protesters, thus leading to an overthrow of the regime's main symbols (President, Vice President, ministers…) and the initiation of a "transformative democratic process".

Bishara's argument thus begins to focus on the transitional period itself, as the "regime retreats" and the "revolution progresses". He further engages in suggesting an approach or a "plan" to deal with the aftermath of the regime's downfall. The prognosis he presents advocates integrating former elites, parts of the political institution, the judiciary system, the army, and protesters in a new system of power transition that introduces a democratic era. The transitional phase should thus be inclusive of certain

[251] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-sābiʻ .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAs43IdIaqo uploaded January 31, 2011, accessed November 10, 2013.

state institutions (especially the judicial system and the army), yet exclusive of other institutions that closely adhere to the existing regime (the presidency and vice presidency, the government, the parliament, in addition to core elites representing the "cluster of forces" that the regime is dependent on, as explained earlier). In other words, Bishara identifies the institutional facts in need of deconstruction in order to achieve the social movement's aim to overcome autocracy on the one hand, and those that need to be incorporated in a new system that introduces democratic rule on the other. Accordingly, contrary to regime institutions, state institutions are considered essential pillars for any sustainable alternative political platform, and since the main aim of the army – as a key state institution – is to maintain stability in Egypt, Bishara expects it to positively interact with the demonstrating masses and to preserve the country's security while it safeguards the launching of a democratic process at the same time.

In the course of his implied distinction between state institutions and bureaucracies on the one hand and regime institutions on the other, Bishara's argument presents a form of motivational framing. When the anchor asks about the possibility of bloodshed if the demonstrators march towards the presidential palace, Bishara stresses the importance of the army's position, since the latter had not collided with protesters at the time, and was thus thought to have taken a neutral stance regarding the uprising rather than one siding with the regime. Bishara's mention that "the army has given a green light" for more demonstrations aims to provoke his viewers to further escalate in order to force the president to flee, in the same way his counterpart in Tunisia had done few weeks earlier. Thus, reassuring messages like "guns will fall silent when a million demonstrate", are meant to counter the regime's methods of intimidating protesters. The main goal for all this, as the following excerpt shows, was to topple the regime's head, yet propose an exit strategy to cut down possible losses and destruction.

The distinction between state institutions and regime institutions is once again underscored in Bishara's commentaries, as he specifically names the army and judicial apparatus. This is because the regime in Egypt, despite its authoritarian nature, was often challenged by parts of the state's institutions. Compared to other bodies, the judiciary

was the most defying, especially with regard to its supervisory powers during elections. In 2005, for example, following constitutional amendments that allowed for the first presidential elections to take place in Egypt, the PEC (Presidential Election Commission)[252] excluded some 1200 judges from supervising the electoral process.[253] The struggle between the PEC and the Judges' Club (comprising of thousands of operating and retired judges) demonstrates the difference between *regime institutional facts* and *state institutional facts*, in the same way the army's discontent regarding the issue of Tawreeth earlier discussed did. The PEC was closely associated with the regime, as it was "largely a ploy to neutralize the Judges Club's members, who had threatened not to monitor elections or endorse winners unless they were granted full independence".[254] The Judges Club's confrontational stance towards Egypt's authorities was not solely restricted to this electoral event. It was rather one based on contesting the executive's subordination of the judicial body and the latter's lack of full autonomy in terms of managing its own affairs as well as supervising and monitoring elections in general.[255] Thus, the Judges' Club that was established in 1939 as an independent institution whose main aim (or function) was to maintain judicial autonomy[256] was not a regime institutional fact, as opposed to the PEC that was granted legitimacy (in terms of status and function) by the ruling authorities themselves. Hence, whilst the regime's loss

[252] The PEC was created in July 2005 following a constitutional amendment that was promoted by the regime as an act of reform. It was made up of 10 members (5 judges and 5 public figures), all appointed by Mubarak and the parliament that was dominated by the ruling National Democratic Party. See Nathan J. Brown and Hisham Nasr, "Egypt's Judges Step Forward: The Judicial Election Boycott and Egyptian Reform", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2005, accessed November 10, 2014. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/PO17.borwn.FINAL.pdf.

[253] Alaa Al-Din Arafat, *Hosni Mubarak and the Future of Democracy in Egypt*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 117.

[254] Ibid, 109.

[255] Nathan J. Brown and Hisham Nasr, "Egypt's Judges Step Forward", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed November 10, 2014. http://carnegieendowment.org/files/PO17.borwn.FINAL.pdf.

[256] Nathalie Bernard-Maugiron, *Judges and Political Reform in Egyp*t, (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2008), 275.

of collective recognition (or collective intentionality) does not affect the presence of institutional facts that outdated the regime itself (such as the Judges' Club or the judicial body as a whole), it results in the delegitimation and therefore dissolution of institutional facts that were organically linked to it (such as the PEC). Bishara's call for alignment with state institutional facts (the judiciary as a whole) against regime institutional facts (the PEC) comes within this context.

Exit strategy needed

The eighth day of protests witnessed mounting domestic pressures on the Egyptian President, in addition to signs of abandonment by international allies. In an article published by *The New York Times* one day earlier, Chairman of the American Senate Foreign Relations Committee, John Kerry, sent a strong message saying "President Hosni Mubarak must accept that the stability of his country hinges on his willingness to step aside gracefully to make way for a new political structure".[257] Calls for Mubarak to step down were gaining international acceptance by the day, and this seemed to have encouraged emphasizing the same demand by protesting masses.

In his eighth day commentary, Bishara once again presents a form of prognostic framing. This time, however, his prognosis stresses the need to grant Mubarak an exit strategy, as that would minimize the possible damages of political transformation. For leaders to accept transition, an "honorable way out should be insured" instead of threatening them with trials and executions. Otherwise, they will fight back with all they have. Bishara refers to several examples in Latin America and South Africa to assert this thought. Even the extreme case of apartheid in the latter was dealt with through reconciliation. He criticizes some slogans and acts that were performed in Tahrir Square and had attracted media coverage, giving the example of a protester who held a rope and a gibbet before TV cameras to symbolize their calls to apply severe punishment. In his prognostic framing of the situation, Bishara highly recommends a peaceful transition

[257] John Kerry, "Allying ourselves with the next Egypt", *The New York Times,* January 31, 2011, accessed March 10, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/01/opinion/01kerry.html?_r=0.

that would allow the Head of State to bargain for an exit, on condition that clear mechanisms to ensure an interim democracy were guaranteed.

> (Presenter asks for commentary, minutes before President Mubarak issues a statement)
>
> Bishara: The principle issue is that the Egyptian people took the streets to impose their will, a democratic will. What we've seen is a form of referendum, a form of elections. This is one of the manifestations of democracy.
>
> The primary achievement would be forcing President Mubarak to step down. This means crossing more than half the way, not all of it though. The people aim to overthrow the regime. The regime is not an individual. The regime is that which precludes free elections. The regime is a security apparatus. The regime is torture in prisons. The regime is a system of corruption and lack of censorship on the movement of financial bids from the state. The regime is corrupting the public sector. The regime is corrupt businessmen. The regime is repressive structures. The regime is not only Mubarak.
>
> (Presenter asks for commentary on speculations that Mubarak plans to make gradual concessions since "he is of a military background" and, thus, "does not run away from the battlefield").
>
> Bishara: There is a debate between historians regarding [claims] that he actually took part in the first air strike [against Israel in 1973] and whether he has any military achievements or not. Many Arab leaders claim that they are descendants of the Prophet and that they have military achievements. Those are the two hobbies that Arab leaders have.
>
> I don't think that a democratic change in the Arab World is possible if there were constant threats to kill the leaders [of Arab states] or execute them or put them on trial, because this will make it harder for other leaders in the region to accept transition. I don't approve of the tone, [like in the case of] someone holding the rope of a gibbet [in the protests]. Even in Latin America, bloody dictatorships were offered honorable exits and gradual transitions. In South Africa, a committee for truth and reconciliation was established but after announcing the end of apartheid. So if it were announced that the regime will end and a transition to democracy will occur, and mechanisms for that were guaranteed, I believe an honorable way out should be insured.[258]

[258] Bišāra, Dr. 'Azmī. "Ṯawrat al-ša'b fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-ṯāmin .. Dr. 'Azmī Bišāra - 1" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Orldn77OvvM uploaded February 1, 2011, accessed November 15, 2013.

Bishara's reference to mass demonstrations as a form of referendum or elections is meant to counter the narrative promoted by the regime and its media regarding the social movement in question. However, and apart from the counterframes it proposes, the account is meant to emphasize the receding legitimacy of Mubarak's regime. The regime, as formerly mentioned, is more than the head of state. It is rather a labyrinth of power structures and relations whose interest is to maintain the status quo and preserve the dominance of its ruling elites. In the excerpt above, Bishara also envisions the regime as a system that legitimizes corruption, fraud, repression, and torture, and whose antithesis is a democratic form of governance and accountability that respects human rights.

Searle's model of interpretation helps explain how the system of representation that the regime aims to sustain is losing significance. Its representative powers are gradually eroding, as a vast poplar consensus is materializing in the form of protests contesting its legitimacy. These protests are of immense representative power. They aim to question the status-function of the regime, as a representative state apparatus, by denying that it acquires collective intentionality. By doing so, they reduce it to a mere set of organizational hierarchies rather than an institutional fact whose status is recognized by a collective acceptance of its functions.

In this sense, the "democracy" that these protests convey is one that disarms the ruling structures of the collective intentionality that renders them legitimate. Concomitantly, a new collective intentionality is crystallizing in open public spaces, one whose implications, according to Bishara, are analogous to those of a "referendum" (in terms of representative power). This emerging power of representation in the Egyptian public sphere evolved into what some (including Bishara) later came to call *revolutionary legitimacy*, as opposed to *constitutional legitimacy*. Thus, if one were to use Searle's model of interpretation, one could assume that revolutionary legitimacy represents an evolving collective intentionality that aims to void constitutional legitimacy, being an existing institutional fact, from its own collective intentionality, and therefore disarm it of its status and function.

In the second part of the excerpt above, Bishara articulates a satirical account of Mubarak's legacy and personal qualifications, as well as of other Arab rulers that he doesn't name. This serves to consolidate his suggested counterframes that deny the narratives and challenge the rhetoric of Egypt's regime and its president. Mubarak's speech that was aired minutes after this commentary, coincidentally tackled the same topic, as he highlighted "his achievements" in the service of his country in what seemed to be an attempt to gain popular empathy.

A battle of camels… and credibility

When al-Jazeera's giant screen in Tahrir Square aired Mubarak's speech on the eighth day, scores of protesters chanted their discontent.[259] However, Mubarak's emphasis on his years of service in the public office and his vows to stay in Egypt until his death sparked the sympathy of many Egyptians. Following his speech, the national television aired videos showing his years of presidency along with recordings of patriotic songs, and dedicated wide coverage to pro-Mubarak rallies,[260] whereas al-Ahram, the state owned newspaper, followed that by leading its front page headline with "Millions march in support of Mubarak".[261]

Yet the regime faced a major setback on the ninth day, when Mubarak's supporters charged protesters in Tahrir Square, some riding camels and horses, in what later became known as the "battle of the camels".[262] The battle-like scene was aired live on television, and the regime's image was once again severely damaged. Subsequently, the White House announced that American President Barack Obama informed President

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[259] Pintak, "The Al Jazeera Revolution," *Foreign Policy*.

[260] Ursula Lindsey, "Revolutions and Counter-Revolutions in the Egyptian Media", *Middle East Research and Information Project*, February 15, 2011, accessed March 20, 2014, http://www.merip.org/mero/mero021511?ip_login_no_cache=b091848efb67c26f6f23ec180a01dee9.

[261] Mark Peterson, "Egypt's media ecology in a time of revolution", *Arab Media and Society* 14 (Summer 2011), accessed April 10, 2014, http://www.arabmediasociety.com/index.php?article=770&p=2.

[262] "Egyptian 'Battle of the Camels' officials acquitted", *BBC News*, October 10, 2102, accessed April 10, 2014, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19905435.

Mubarak that the transition of power "cannot wait till the end of his term".[263] Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied to that saying that initiating an immediate transitional phase would "contradict the constitution".[264]

Bishara's commentary on the tenth day comes within this context. It provides a response to the argument Mubarak presented in his interview on American network ABC, in which he said he is "troubled by the violence in Tahrir Square", blaming the Muslim Brotherhood for that and warning of chaos in case he leaves office or they seize power.[265] The counterframes presented in the commentary emphasize the predicament of chaos versus stability. The former, according to Bishara, has been caused by the regime's deliberate release of thugs to disrupt social order, and not by its protesting antagonists, as it claims. However, Bishara's defensive act of counterframing impels him to further clarify his interpretation of the situation. This time, he refers to the popular upsurge as a "reformist movement" with a "revolutionary structure", rather than simply a "revolution". This hybrid description or representation of the event, albeit vague, aims to distinguish between two different scenarios. The first is a complete dismantling of the constitutional order and state structures, leading to power vacuum and high risks of chaos, whereas the second is an organized form of transition that introduces gradual alterations of the constitution, until the basic structure of power relations gets reformulated on different grounds.

> (Presenter asking for commentary on Mubarak's interview with ABC in which he warned of chaos in the event of him leaving office or the Muslim Brotherhood seizing power)

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[263] "Miṣr tantaqid atrāfan ajnabīya bi-ša'n ta'līqihā 'alā al-waḍiḥ al-dākhilī fī l-bilād" [Egypt criticizes foreign players for commenting on domestic affairs], *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 3, 2011. Accessed April 10, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11755&article=606691&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U5C6Czn7VD0.

[264] Ibid.

[265] Christiane Amanpour, "Mubarak: If I resign today there will be chaos", *ABC News,* February 3, 2011, accessed May 15, 2014, http://abcnews.go.com/International/egypt-abc-news-christiane-amanpour-exclusive-interview-president/story?id=12833673.

Bishara: There is no truth in what he or his deputy said today. Regarding the issue of chaos, revolutions in general create chaos and lead to constitutional vacuum. In principle, revolutions are against [existing] constitutions. They are not within those constitutions. He [i.e. Mubarak] has an organized revolution that opposes chaos and he faced it with chaos and thugs… This is a reformist movement and not a revolution. It has a structure of a revolution yet carries reformist demands… I'm not worried of chaos… There is no such thing as chaos due to replacing an individual. This is egomania; a sanctification of the individual as if he has no replacement.

[Omar Suleiman] does not even appear to be representing Mubarak. He lacks charisma. It's as if he's an employee of Mubarak. Second, he thanks the youth [protestors] for exhibiting their need for change. Then he asks them to go back home. How can we guarantee that the demands would be fulfilled if they went back home? How can we guarantee that this doesn't turn into arrests? How can we believe him after today's events in Tahrir Square? It is obvious that they do not want to submit to the demands but rather to pass the crisis then sit with the parties and tell them that foreign policy is not your concern, that security is not your concern, that relations with Israel are not your concern: let's focus on domestic affairs. The Muslim Brotherhood are outside the picture, let's organize elections with the current existing parties; elections managed in the presence of a man who controls all the security apparatus and all the intelligence. He can then appoint the new president [under the banner of] an electoral process.

(Presenter asking about the regime's harassment of media outlets)

Bishara: Al-Jazeera, irrespective of our opinion [regarding its output], saved lives yesterday. Imagine it had not been present in Tahrir Square last night… Who would they have blamed for initiating [aggression]? An investigation committee would have been created. [It would have concluded that] infiltrators were the ones who started it and that they bear responsibility.

(Presenter asking for commentary on Suleiman's reference to a conspiracy in his portrayal of events)

We can say, with full confidence, that 90% of the Egyptian people are part of this conspiracy if this were one.[266]

[266] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṭawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-ʻāšr .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 2" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFHaPw6X9Gg February 3, 2011,accessed November 19, 2013.

Albeit exposing a form of inconsistency, Bishara's description of the uprising as a reformist movement with a revolutionary structure could be linked to his previous mention of the necessity to cooperate with existing state institutions (the army and judicial body in particular) in order to secure the envisioned change. It could also be seen within the context of a discursive process involving both, al-Jazeera's narrative and that of the regime. Accordingly, when the regime highlights issues that closely relate to the people's everyday concerns (such as lack of security), al-Jazeera is compelled to reassess its promoted frames in order to balance between long-term and short-term demands. Thus, frames of democracy, freedom of expression, and revolution, for instance, lose much of their resonance if none of the daily concerns were articulated alongside. This balance between abstract or distant demands (like democracy) and the daily experiences of the subjects of mobilization (like security) is of particular importance, as it relates to the salience of the framing process itself. In order to maintain this salience, the latter should have a high experiential commensurability, i.e. it should be "congruent or resonant with the personal, everyday experiences of the targets of mobilization".[267] Accordingly, Bishara seems to be more selective when it comes to his descriptions, as he aims to absorb the counterframes promoted by regime figures, precisely those regarding the daily experiences of the subjects of mobilization. Concomitantly, and in a more direct response to the regime's frames, he refers to the previous day's events (charge against protesters in Tahrir Square) to further accent his viewpoints, discredit the narrative of the president, and underscore the potent role of al-Jazeera: had it not been for the latter's live broadcast of the event through smuggled cameras and activists' phone devices, the regime would have easily been able to manipulate the story. The channel's interactivity with the event in question has thus empowered a narrative that challenges the regime's diagnostic framing (blame and responsibility) that was carried out since the protests' early days. It has complemented the role of its guest intellectuals and has accordingly acted as an institutional organic intellectual as earlier explained.

[267] Benford & Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 621.

In the course of his counterframing, Bishara undermines the formal Egyptian narrative alleging that the discourse is reflective of some form of conspiracy. He emphasizes the protests' representative scope, once again, by sarcastically asserting that "90% of Egyptians are part of the conspiracy". In a study on "framing the Egyptian uprising in Arabic language newspapers and social media", Hamdy and Gomaa demonstrate how protesters in pro-government newspapers were "systematically portrayed as incapable, misguided youth who were helpless to resist foreign influence or to formulate a strategy".[268] This had been the attitude of pro-regime media from the very first day and was reflective of the regime's narrative and congruent with its rhetoric. Nonetheless, this narrative was gradually breached, as some officials began showing signs of relative submission to certain realities. This was evident on the tenth day when, on the private owned network, al-Hayat, newly appointed Prime Minister Ahmed Shafik defined the events taking place as an "extreme, collective expression of public opinion", albeit stressing that they do not constitute a revolution.[269]

In this tenth day commentary, Bishara also undermines the capabilities of Vice President Omar Suleiman, regarding him as someone who "lacks charisma" and who acts as "an employee of Mubarak". This serves in demoting Suleiman's image as a frame articulator defending the regime's stance and countering the social movement's frames. Following this devaluation of stature, Bishara exposes the contradictions that Suleiman's statement conveys, namely when the latter thanks protesters for vocalizing their demands, while, at the same time, accenting the narrative of conspiracy (that they allegedly took part in). He also casts doubt on all the initiatives proposed by regime figures (President, Vice President, and Prime Minister), stressing that they "do not want to submit to the demands, but rather to pass the crisis". Basing on that, he warns the opposition of succumbing to the regime's exit strategy, as the latter is meant to fracture

[268] Naila Hamdy and Ehab Gomaa, "Framing the Egyptian Uprising in Arabic Language Newspapers and Social Media", *Journal of Communication,* 62 (2012), 199.

[269] Šafīq, Aḥmad. "Al-ša'b yurīd al-ṯawra – February 3, television - Aḥmad Šafīq" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EBBcWPSkMI uploaded May 9, 2011, accessed April 10, 2014.

the social movement calling for radical change by bribing certain factions with limited parliamentarian representation and using the Muslim Brotherhood as a tool for intimidation, in the same way it had done for decades. This battle of credibility involving various forms of framing and counterframing between the social movement's protagonists and antagonists was carried out on a daily basis. Bishara took part in this battle in the course of articulating the movement's demands and proposing confrontational strategies. In the excerpt below from the eleventh day of the uprising, he goes back to emphasizing the revolutionary nature of the movement after the regime's setbacks following the "Battle of the Camels", and couples that with forms of motivational framing that call for testing the army and pushing it to choose sides.

> Bishara [giving a brief summary of the course of the uprising]: It started off with youngsters acting on Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks. This evolved into demonstrations and soon they [young activists] figured they are capable of triggering the movement of millions, whereas the regime changed [its techniques] from provoking [the protesters] with F15s and F16s to provoking them with animals… So the regime is deteriorating whereas they [the protesters] are progressing. It is clear from the regime's attitude that it is deteriorating and losing confidence, and its behavior is characterized by confusion, whereas it is clear that the people of Egypt are joining the revolution and that the revolution is becoming more extensive and popular. The people of Egypt have expressed the best of what's in them. For example, when was the last time in which a mosque preacher addressed Egyptian men and women, Muslims and Christians? This regime has brought out the best of us as a result of the enmity expressed towards it… I believe that this, in itself, reassures the people of Egypt [that] the revolution is heading towards the better not the worse. Not [producing] violent gangs nor a radical movement nor a new Iran, but rather a developed civil society.
>
> The revolution is not as they say; a smooth transfer of power to the Vice President of the republic. Revolutions occur to change the nature of the regime. Negotiations occur with the regime after its defeat and if it acknowledges this [defeat], on how to change its nature. And I think that our brothers, our colleague intellectuals in particular, should not mix things up and confuse the people [when they talk about] transferring powers to the Vice President. This is a revolution and not some kind of reform from within the regime. The people have not protested and died to transfer power to the Vice President!

> The issue here is how to prevent [the government] from transforming the revolution into a sit in. We heard the Prime Minister today saying "we can live with a sit-in in a square". The Egyptian army is constantly being complimented but it hasn't been pushed to choose sides up until now… There has been no friction with it and the protesters haven't practically moved in that direction… I am sure that in the event of pushing the army to make a choice, it will choose the people.[270]

In the excerpt above, Bishara briefly engages in a process of frame articulation, as he aligns the events of the uprising from their early formation, when calls for action on social media preceded the crystallization of the movement itself. His portrayal of the experience is meant to construct a narrative that undermines that of the regime. Using the term revolution once again, he highlights the latter's advancement in terms of scope and impact, and accents its growing representational power. This progression, according to Bishara, came opposite to the regime's declining position, as the latter's techniques for intimidating protesters deteriorated from flying fighter jets over Tahrir Square days earlier, to sending horses and camels to assault demonstrators. Bishara's sarcasm isn't only used to devaluate the regime and the methods it uses for handling the situation, but rather to highlight the potency of pro-revolution frames. If the "revolution" is advancing, this means that the frames promoted by its protagonists - and Bishara is one of them - have empirical credibility. Contrary to that, the regime's frames lack consistency, and are characterized by confusion and contradictions.

Bishara's engagement in frame disputes with opposition figures does not subside either. It rather evolves with the evolution of the popular upsurge. Once again, he warns his "colleague intellectuals" of confusing reform with revolutionary change. The argument presented here was previously raised when Omar Suleiman was appointed Vice President. However, and in consistency with his former account of the "organized form of transition" that the social movement is aiming to achieve, Bishara does not deny the need to *negotiate* with the regime on "how to change its nature". Nonetheless, he stresses that this should happen *after* the regime admits its defeat and submits to the

[270] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-ḥādī ʻašr .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1zuMzSC4GM uploaded February 4, 2011, accessed November 23, 2013.

obligations that come along with this admission. The term revolution, therefore, is once again used to accent the aims of the social movement with regard to fundamentally changing the constitution (as an institutional fact) and reconfiguring the formation of other institutional facts (presidency, government, parliament…). The revolution's goal was to create a different constitutional order that integrates certain state institutions and political elites and excludes those that are representative of the ruling class or are organically connected to it. This relative inconsistency in Bishara's use of the term pertains to the regime's success in promoting its frames following Mubarak's speech that attained popular sympathy, and its subsequent loss of credibility after the "battle of the camels". The regime's assault of protesters in Tahrir Square allowed the social movement's protagonists to elevate their tone once again and bank on the footage broadcast on al-Jazeera and circulated on social media to motivate protesters and urge them to stand their grounds and pursue their demands of overthrowing the regime.

Bishara also engages in a form of diagnostic framing when he says that the "regime brought out the best of (protesters) as a result of the enmity expressed towards it". Accordingly, the demonstrators, because of diagnosing the regime as their rival, have maintained the clarity of their demands and deployed an inclusive rhetoric that transcends social divisions. This explains, for example, the scene of a preacher addressing all Egyptians, men and women as well as Muslims and Christians, with no discrimination. Basing on the movement's inclusiveness, Bishara concludes it is heading towards a democratic form of change. His reference to the Iranian Revolution in the course of negating a similar outcome comes after Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamine'i praised what he called an "Islamic liberation movement" in Tunisia and Egypt, following Friday's prayers that day in Tehran.[271] Thus, this negation comes to further emphasize his account of the social movement's goals and identity.

[271] "Ḍaǧṭ Urūbī ʻalā Mubārak... wa Khāmin'ī yadḫul ʻalā al-khaṭ" [European pressure on Mubarak… and Khamenie steps in] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 5, 2011. Accessed May 25, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11757&article=606969&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U5R9Pjn7VD0.

A day earlier, the Egyptian Prime Minister Ahmad Shafik said in his interview that the government "can live with a sit-in in a square". This was an important indicator of the possible outcomes of the social movement, were it not able to shake the existing status quo. Shafik's statement implied that his government aims to gradually contain the movement as it transforms into a mere sit-in in Tahrir Square, amidst calls for dialogue and political concessions. The time factor would then play in favor of the regime, as the movement's momentum recedes and the protesters' enthusiasm declines. Faced by the possibility of this scenario (albeit slight due to the vast expansion of the movement), Bishara proposes that the protesters "push the army to choose sides". Previously, he had expressed a belief that the army has given protesters a green light to further escalate, and had speculated that it would not confront the demonstrators were they to head in huge numbers to the presidential palace. This time, he suggests a clear prognosis regarding the issue in question: in order to accelerate the "revolutionary" process, the army should be tested. Once it openly aligns with protesters, the balance will severely tilt in their favor. The social movement was thought to be running the last and most crucial mile before attaining its goals.

Running the last mile

On the twelfth day of demonstrations, the Muslim Brotherhood announced they are ready to engage in political dialogue with the regime "as long as it shows seriousness". This announcement was issued albeit their statement regarding Friday's demonstrations (eleventh day) was of a relatively high tone, as it praised the protests' "legitimate demands that call for changing the regime and the resignation of its president", and described them using the same words Bishara did; as a "direct popular referendum".[272]

[272] "Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn: lan nurāshiḥ aḥad li-ri'āsat Miṣr", [The Muslim Brotherhood: We will not run for presidency] *al-Sharq al-Awsat.* February 6, 2011. Accessed May 28, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&issueno=11758&article=607020&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U5R8dzn7VD0.

Calls for dialogue were concurrent with the resignation of the National Party's politburo, whose members included the president's son and Secretary of the Policy Committee Gamal Mubarak, in addition to the party's Secretary General Safwat al-Shereef and the Chief of Presidential Staff Zakaria Azmi,[273] i.e. what Bishara described earlier as the inner circle surrounding the president and constituting one of the regime's main pillars, those who should be the target of any fundamental change.

The resignation of the politburo was a significant event of heavy political implications, as it revealed the regime's tendency to yield under pressure. Moreover, it accredited the rationale of those who were pushing for fundamental change, Azmi Bishara being one of them. The congruency between Bishara's previously articulated prognostic framing and later occurrences armed his narrative with empirical credibility. This credence allowed him to further accent the need to pressure the regime and force it to negotiate an exit strategy rather than engage with unbinding dialogue. For that to happen, the regime had to acknowledge its defeat and start acting accordingly, yet the opposition had to act as such as well. On the thirteenth day, as the following excerpt shows, Bishara engaged in the last main frame dispute with local opposition figures and social movement protagonists, before the regime began showing signs of collapse and alternative political possibilities are proposed.

> (Presenter asking for a commentary on the negotiations between the opposition and Vice President Omar Suleiman)
>
> Bishara: To begin with, it's a good thing that we're now using the term *negotiations* instead of unbinding *dialogue*… We have objected, right from the beginning, to the usage of the term dialogue because it is unbinding… because there is a real political dispute. This is a revolution against the regime and not a misunderstanding. Secondly, what are you negotiating the regime on? Is it possible that you negotiate the regime on its downfall? You go to negotiate when the regime is convinced that it has been defeated in order to agree on an exit strategy… This regime is

[273] "Miṣr: Riyāḥ al-taġyīr tutīḥ bi-qiyādāt al-ḥizb al-ḥākim" [The winds of change oust the leaders of the rulingparty], *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 6, 2011. Accessed May 28, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=1&issueno=11758&article=606998&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U5R8WDn7VD0.

> not convinced it has been defeated yet. This is why negotiating the regime is equivalent to granting it legitimacy.
>
> When you start a revolution you have to be on the offensive. You have to say: your presence in power [referring to the regime] is costing the state one billion dollars per day, your presence in power and not protesting.
>
> For instance, they [the opposition] want the regime, even our brothers, the Muslim Brotherhood, to acknowledge that the protesters are honorable and patriotic. Is this what is required from the regime? So you need a certificate from the regime acknowledging that those are not foreign agents? Are you taking this accusation seriously? On the contrary; *you* should be accusing this regime of submitting to foreign interests rather than maintaining national sovereignty, of involving the United States [in its decision making], of losing sovereignty over Sina'a, and of selling gas to Israel for one third of its price!
>
> This regime and all its constitutional arguments are from the past now. We want a new regime that creates a new constitution, or a new parliament that amends the constitution. This is why we need a new phase headed by a neutral figure; the head of the Constitutional Court [for instance]. This man or any other [neutral] one [should] head this transition. Elections are then organized and a parliament gets elected. The latter either amends the constitution or creates a new one.[274]

In the abovementioned, Bishara engages in a frame dispute with opposition factions once more. He particularly names the Muslim Brotherhood, with critical reference to their rhetoric that either revealed their hesitance or their avoidance of full-fledged commitment to radical change. Following this rationale, Bishara insists that rather than deploying a defensive strategy, the opposition should be on the offensive, and instead of taking the regime's accusations of protesters seriously, the opposition should be the one condemning it for submitting to foreign powers and acting in accordance to the latter's interests.

However, calls for raising the benchmark of demands were challenged by the country's aggravating political, security, and economic conditions. Bishara's comments concerning the costs of the popular uprising (alleges that it is causing a loss of one

[274] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYC9nVncYTc uploaded February 6, 2011, accessed November 25, 2013.

billion dollars a day) came hours after the international credit rating agency Moody's issued discouraging reports regarding the economic situation in Egypt. The corporation speculated that the latter's national currency would soon deteriorate as foreigners and rich local businessmen exchange their cash reserves of local currency into foreign currencies instead.[275] In principle, this kind of data serves the regime. It credits the latter's narrative regarding the repercussions of the uprising, as the narrative focused on negative outcomes on the levels of politics (Muslim Brotherhood seizing power), security (chaos and social discord), and economy (massive financial loss). Thus, blaming the regime for any of these possible outcomes was an essential part of the counterframing process that Bishara engages in here as well as in previous and later commentaries. Accordingly, Bishara's counter narrative suggests that the regime's insistence on holding on to power and its refusal to submit to calls for fundamental change have resulted in the exacerbation of political, economic, and security conditions in Egypt.

Bishara also presents a prognosis of a possible scenario in which radical change is secured and an exit strategy is granted to the regime. To Bishara, a transitional phase headed by a neutral figure like the head of the Constitutional Court serves both purposes. Thereafter, parliamentary elections are organized and a new legislative body creates a constitution replacing the old one or substantially alters the latter. Engaging with the constitutional issue, even in theory, represents the first phase of deconstructing the institutional fact that legitimizes the regime and of proposing an alternative one. This shall be examined in our analysis of the following excerpts.

Alternative political possibilities

On the fifteenth day of the uprising, Bishara clearly defines the issue in question as one of creating a new constitutional order. This, accordingly, is the ultimate

[275] "Moody's tatawaqqa' ittijāh al-ajānib wa-aṣḥāb al-ṯarawāt li-taḥwīl wā-dā'i'him ilā 'umulāt ajnabīya" [Moody's speculates that the foreigners and the rich exchange their money into foreign currency] *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ,* February 8, 2011. Accessed June 3, 2014. http://www.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=6&issueno=11760&article=607320&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U6Vu2TmXJD0.

ramification of the evolving social discourse. To support his argument, he cites the similar case of Indonesia in which the deconstruction of a regime's ruling structures (institutional facts) and the subsequent construction of an alternative authority (alternative institutional facts) paid off well on the political and economic levels. His identification of a set of postulates that has "resulted from an exchange of opinions, ideas, statements, and unplanned reactions" highlights a newly emerging collective intentionality amongst the protesting masses, one that has disarmed the existing system of power structures from its status as a ruling authority.

> Bishara: A set of postulates has imposed itself, resulting from an exchange of opinions, ideas, and statements, as well as unplanned reactions. Anyone who breaches it would lose the masses. Those postulates include overthrowing the regime and initiating dialogue only after its downfall. The issue is not that of constitutional amendments in the presence of the current regime. It is that of overthrowing the regime and creating a new constitution.
>
> The revolutionary movement has now put everything into place. What were today's demonstrations characterized by? First, their pervasiveness more than any other time… Secondly, the [movement towards] public headquarters did not affect [the sit-in in] Tahrir Square. The solid core is still in Tahrir Square, but this doesn't mean that tens of thousands cannot move towards public facilities owned by the state and by the people, without resorting to violence [but rather] through civil disobedience.
>
> The decision here is political not legal. The resolution is political not constitutional. The question of power is a political one that is resolved politically and not through constitutional debates… There is a difference between *legitimacy* and *legality* [terms used in English]. Legitimacy is superior to law. Our question is about legitimacy. All these legal procedures [taken by the regime] are no more legitimate, albeit *procedurally* [term used in English] legal. They are illegitimate because a revolutionary legitimacy has now emerged. Constituent assemblies after revolutions are not elected by the way. They are representative of all social sectors. This was the case of the French revolution's Declaration of Human Rights for instance.
>
> The case of Suharto in Indonesia is very similar to that of Mubarak. Indonesia was transformed into an economic miracle after fighting corruption, [allowing] people to work freely, renewing investment laws through transparent means that attracts people [and stimulates them] to work more, invest more, and become more creative…

> [Presenter asking for a response to the argument that "10 million protesters" on the streets want to impose their opinion on the rest of the Egyptians]
>
> Bishara: Mush less than those have changed the course of history. The question should be reversed: Where are the millions of the National Party and the millions who have allegedly voted for the party in the elections? Despite that, I say that each one of those represents the Egyptian people or represents a family or a neighborhood. I can easily claim that 70 million Egyptians have practically taken part in these demonstrations. However, I suggest that [the Egyptians] make use of former similar experiences done by other peoples in order to negate such claims. Even those who are staying home can make a signal, raise a flag for instance, or stop their cars for 15 minutes each day.[276]

As earlier explained, the social movement's protagonists gradually came to label it as one bearing revolutionary legitimacy. Bishara uses this term in the excerpt discussed here in the course of distinguishing the notion of "legitimacy" from that of "legality". This distinction serves in countering the regime's narrative regarding the uprising's degree of representation. It is meant to assert that legitimacy lies in the vibrant public calling for change and not in the constitutional frameworks reflecting existing power relations, nor in the legal operational activity of the state's bureaucracy. The latter, even though it continues to function, no more bears collective acceptance, as the regime was challenged by vast numbers of protesters calling for its downfall. Bishara emphasizes this point in the counterframing he presents as he compares the immense anti-regime protests to the humble demonstrations organized by their antagonists – supposedly millions in number according to previous elections results. He regards this as sufficient proof that the regime and the popular majority rest at opposite ends since anti-regime protesters are also representative of broad stagnant social sectors. The latter include unmobilized segments having similar or identical viewpoints, family members of activists, young and old age groups, etc.

[276] Bišāra, Dr. ʿAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʿb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-ḫāmis ʿašr .. Dr. ʿAzmī Bišāra" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrscL6TP2FY uploaded February 8, 2011, accessed December 8, 2013.

Bishara builds on the abovementioned to present a form of prognostic framing, as he urges the movement's inactive proponents to take part in fostering the discourse through symbolic gestures. Thus, simple acts like raising the Egyptian flag on the place of residence would serve the movement even if active participation in rallies were not taking place. Such gestures would also serve in negating the regime's framing narrative, as they credit the claim regarding the movement's vast representation and the regime's loss of collective acceptance.

In his explication of the idea of collective intentionality, Searle explains that a "sufficient number of members of the relevant community must continue to recognize and accept the existence of institutional facts." He adds that "because the status is constituted by its collective acceptance, and because the function, in order to be performed, requires the status, it is essential to the function that there be continued acceptance of the status".[277] Accordingly, if one were to integrate the literature on framing with Searle's model of social constructivism, one could think of the emphasis on revolutionary legitimacy by the movement's protagonists as a form of frame amplification of the newly emerging collective intentionality. This emphasis could also be understood as a form of promotion for alternative political possibilities or, using Searle's terms, of alternative institutional facts.

Bishara's argument emphasizes the social movement's pervasiveness once more and highlights its increasing momentum (ability to maintain its presence in Tahrir Square and mobilize towards different public institutions simultaneously). This is meant to further amplify the movement's representative character vastly outweighing that of the regime. In other words, it is meant to underscore the movement's expanding legitimacy on the one hand, and the regime's receding legitimacy on the other, or, using Searle's terms, the extent of collective acceptance that the movement is gaining and the regime is losing.

On the sixteenth day of the uprising, the Muslim Brotherhood warned of a

[277] Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality,* 117.

possible military takeover after Egypt's Foreign Minister Ahmad Aboul Gheit announced that the army shall intervene to "protect the constitution" if turmoil breaks out. Warnings of that sort grew louder as the regime faced further decay and questions regarding its legitimacy became more pressing. On the government front, the Minister of Culture Jaber Asfour[278], a well-known writer and academic, resigned following heavy criticism by Egyptian intellectuals for accepting to join an "illegitimate cabinet".[279] Concomitantly, anti-regime protesters laid siege to the parliament and national television headquarters and surrounded army barricades in both areas.[280]

With the regime's defenses weakening, the question of legitimacy became the core of its debate with its adversaries. The regime held on to the constitution, as an institutional fact representative of collective intentionality. On the other hand, its opponents alleged that a new collective intentionality had emerged and evolved in public spaces (where protests were taking place) and outside constitutional frameworks, claiming that the latter have lost their status as guarantors of social order. Accordingly, Bishara insists, once again, that the answer to the quandary in hand lies in reconfiguring existing institutional facts (regime constitution and institutions) and not in replacing certain ruling elites with others from within the regime itself.

> (Presenter asking for commentary on Omar Suleiman's statement in which he warned from having to take "decisive measures" and on interpretations of this statement as a threat of staging a military coup)

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[278] Jaber Asfour was a well known linguistic and intellectual. He taught in various Arab and International universities including Harvard University. He contributed to several cultural projects, some of which were organized by the UNESCO and the Arab League. See "Dr. Jaber Asfour", Arab Thought Foundation, accessed May 15, 2016. http://arabthought.org/en/dr-jaber-asfour#.V3A0KHgxHUo

[279] "Al-ğālayan yataṣā'ad fī Miṣr", [Escalation increasing in Egypt] *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ.* February 10, 2011. Accessed June 7, 2014. http://classic.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=1&issueno=11762&article=607668&search=%E3%D5%D1&state=true#.U61exTmXJD0.

[280] Jack Shenker, "Egypt protesters surround state TV building", *The Guardian*, February 11, 2011, accessed June 7, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/11/egypt-protests-state-tv-building.

Bishara: I hope that the idea of settling for an alternative from within the regime is over now because this regime wants to either survive or fall as a whole. There is an analogy in political science called the *inverted pyramid*. When you hit the top of a pyramid standing on its head, it would totter because it has no base. [Similarly] the regime fears that if its head were hit, it would die. Everything would get destabilized if the head were hit.

There is no such thing as impartiality. In the end, the army will be obliged to preserve legitimacy… The question is: which legitimacy? It is obvious that legitimacy is gradually becoming popular legitimacy. The army might need time before recognizing this. It might clash [with protesters] and this might cause casualties. But, in the end, it will realize that. It is preferable that this happens prior to any clashes… [However] this has happened in every place around the world.

I believe that the Egyptian revolution [should] now be guided by a strategy and a leadership that is ready to weigh options – and a leadership *is* an organized body that weighs options… The first phase of the Egyptian revolution was not a "revolution", [albeit] we, as well as others, have called it a "revolution"… At a certain point, we felt that it deserves to be called a revolution for the following reasons: First, because it introduced the issue of power, the issue of rule. Second, because it was general, extensive, and simultaneous. Third, because it comprised all aspects of life. Fourth, because it didn't propose its demands within the context of the regime. The difference between a revolution on the one hand, and an uprising or a protest on the other, is that the latter all have demands in the context of the [existing] regime.

This is a revolution that was initiated by youngsters, but it is not a youth revolution. I should warn from this issue because many Egyptian commentators on the Egyptian Television and some Egyptian channels described it as a youth revolution, as if it were a misunderstanding between generations. This reminds me of the tone of the elderly in the 1968 revolution in Europe. They dealt with it as if it were an issue of a generational gap [term used in English], a revolution of a generation against another that could be dealt with through [mutual] understanding and education etc…[281]

In the above statement, Bishara uses the *inverted pyramid* analogy to explain that the regime has no base and would thus "totter if the head were hit". This falls into the

[281] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Miṣr .. al-yawm al-sādis ʻašr .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHXKPrZdS8E uploaded February 9, 2011, accessed December 10, 2013.

same prognostic framing he had been promoting for days, in which he asserted that the ultimate goal lies in forcing the president to step down, as this is the only means to initiate a serious deconstruction of existing institutional facts. By the sixteenth day, the question of legitimacy was forcing itself upon the army - the institution acting as the state's main tool for enforcing public order. Bishara asserts that the army has to choose between a regime whose legitimacy is eroding and a popular movement that is gradually attaining collective acceptance. The protesters' movement towards (and siege of) institutions representing state sovereignty and symbolizing the regime's legitimacy like the parliament was compelling the military to make a stance. According to Bishara, it might take time before the army recognizes that popular legitimacy has surpassed the constitutional legitimacy of the regime. Nevertheless, he asserts that this would ultimately change, possibly after colliding with protesters. Thus, he reaffirms his former prognostic framing regarding the need to compel the army to choose sides. In parallel, his prognosis promoting the need to march towards state institutions was gradually materializing, albeit the move was still limited to the parliament and state television at this point (preparations for the march towards the presidential palace began the following day).

Bishara's prognostic framing also suggests the need to provide the movement with leadership and strategy. This prognosis is presented as a general guideline for fundamental change, ultimately leading to the reconfiguration of existing institutional facts. Contrary to previous engagements, his account of the movement as a revolution is retrospectively presented in this excerpt. In this scope, he explains that his (as well as other protagonists') framing of the upsurge during its early days was a motivational one, as it wasn't an accurate description but rather an implicit call for action. Yet he affirms that the evolution of the upsurge validated its depiction as a revolution later on. Towards the end of the excerpt, Bishara's counterframing of pro-regime representations claiming that the uprising reflects a generational gap is meant to further assert the nature of the discourse as one aiming to replace institutional facts that have lost their collective acceptance, rather than some form of "misunderstanding between generations".

Bishara's retrospective revision of his (and al-Jazeera's) narrative construction was also articulated in his concluding commentary on the day Mubarak's resignation was announced as shall later be shown.

Religion in the service of motivation

The contribution of Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi to the discourse under study was a substantial one. It added a religious dimension to the framing process delivered by al-Jazeera to its broad audience. Al-Qaradawi's interpretations of the event, despite their scarcity, heavily relied on theological accounts and were often presented in the form of motivational framing. The cleric invested in his highly regarded stature amongst a wide array of Islamists to boldly defy the regime and engage in a pear-to-pear discourse. The motivational framing presented was regularly fueled by religious incentives. In a conservative society like that of Egypt, this variable helps in maximizing the impact of the framing process. Al-Jazeera invested in that well: The questions and comments posed by its presenters accented the religious facet on multiple occasions and oriented the discussion in that direction. In the following, we present three excerpts followed by a brief reference to a fourth contribution by al-Qaradawi. We have settled for mere references to religious texts (Quranic verses and Islamic litanies) and refrained from citing them, as their interpretation lies beyond our scope of discussion. We are rather interested in revealing their instrumental use in the framing process presented, as they only come to emphasize the messages delivered through the texts as a whole.

Like Azmi Bishara, Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi was keen on distinguishing between the state's institutional facts and those that legitimize the regime or constitute it. Following President Mubarak's first speech, al-Qaradawi hailed the protesters for their endurance and urged them to persist on their demands and to refrain from sabotaging state property or confronting security forces. In this context, al-Qaradawi deployed a potent religious oratory to promote his (and al-Jazeera's) frames of the uprising, precisely that it aims to maintain the state, yet replace the regime.

(Presenter asks al-Qaradawi to comment on events in Egypt and to send a message on air - via phone)

Al-Qaradawi: I have only three messages to deliver; one to the rebellious people of Egypt, another to the dear Egyptian army, and a third to the Egyptian regime and its head President Hosni Mubarak. As for my word to the people, I hail them [for igniting] their blessed uprising against corruption after enduring poverty, hunger, and unemployment for so long, and while witnessing those enjoying the riches of the country, spending its money, and looting its lands. It is inevitable that those who have endured would rise up one day and say *no*. The people said no in these peaceful marches and demonstrations. They left their homes and took the street, not even armed with sticks, and held nothing but rosaries and the Quran. They refuse to live this miserable life. They want dignity, freedom, and their daily bread, but, unfortunately, they were met with security [measures]… I have made a statement today through the Egyptian newspaper *al-Shurouk* in which I asked the protesters not to clash with security forces, as they are part of you and you are part of them. And perhaps many of them have the same complaints as you do and would have joined you had they had the chance. Unfortunately, we saw martyrs falling along with more than a thousand wounded yesterday… I repeat my call once more. Do not lay your hands on any of the state's institutions or any property, public or private, for this is *haram*. I call upon the people to continue in this uprising, for, God willing, your persistence will bring you [your] rights.

As for my word to the dear Egyptian army, I call upon it to protect Egypt in the coming period, as it is a period of utmost importance. I do not ask it to rule, as we do not want to throw the ball in the military court once again and end up with semi-military civilians ruling us. We want the army to hand in the rule to civilians, and those of them [the military] who want to rule should take off their military uniform and practice [politics] according to the rules of democracy and *shura*. I want the army to remain as I see it in the footage before me, to refrain from assaulting anyone and to maintain security from a distance.

As for my word to the Egyptian regime and its head, President Hosni Mubarak… we've been waiting for his statement for long. Yet he gave us a speech [that shows that] he's living in a different world… He doesn't feel the anguish of the people. All he said was that he'd be dismissing the government… He didn't say he won't be running for presidency, nor that he won't bequeath his rule, nor that he'd be dissolving the parliament and the Shura Council that have been established on electoral fraud, nor that he'd be putting an end to the emergency law that has been ruling Egypt for decades.

> I advise President Mubarak to abandon his position and leave Egypt. There is no other solution to this problem. Egypt has lost tens of billions in days… Leave, Mubarak. Thirty years are enough… Have mercy on the people and leave so that the destruction doesn't increase. Tens of people have died in one day for protesting in demand for their right in social justice and human dignity, but you and your soldiers have faced them with bullets… I advise you, [Mr.] President, to make use of the lesson of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali and voluntarily leave on your feet while you could, instead of being forced to do that. I don't want the masses to put you on trial. I want you to be on trial before a just court, a civilian court, unlike the military courts that you create to sue your opponents… [Cites Quranic verses] God gives respite but never neglects and he sets a time for everything [cites Quranic verses].
>
> I say this in my name and in the name of all the people of Egypt who are asking you to leave. I say this in the name of thousands of religious scholars in Egypt and the Islamic World.[282]

In excerpt above, al-Qaradawi's three messages are demonstrative of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing. His word to the protesting masses is motivational and inciting of persistent action, as he hails the demonstrators and encourages them to continue their upsurge until they achieve their goals, while amplifying themes like dignity and freedom (alternative possibilities) as opposed to poverty, hunger, corruption, and unemployment (existing circumstances). Al-Qaradawi's mention of the inevitability of the uprising is stimulating of further action in itself, precisely when coupled with a religious depiction of its occurrences. His portrayal of unarmed activists "holding nothing but the Quran" serves in iconizing the movement and furthering its allure amongst conservatives in general and Islamists in particular. Al-Qaradawi's prognostic framing is evident in his emphasis on the need to maintain the peaceful character of the uprising and to refrain from colliding with security forces despite their occasional use of force, and from damaging public and private assets alike. His prognosis, however, is reinforced by the use of religious terminology. Thus is his emphasis that vandalism and intentional destruction of property is *haram;* it is forbidden according to the teachings of Islam, and any violator of the teachings is subject to divine penalty in the afterlife. This

[282] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKTLQQZ_KSQ uploaded January 29, 2011, accessed April 27, 2014.

Islamist terminology serves in delineating certain limits of action amongst conservative activists (Islamists and otherwise), the latter constituting a high percentage of protesters. It allows for a degree of orientation and control and therefore a relatively cohesive strategy, at least within the communal strata subject to the Sheikh's influence.

In his message to the army, al-Qaradawi anticipates a "new Egypt" with civil rule that functions within the frameworks of democracy and shura. This part of the excerpt does not exhibit any particular form of framing, as the army was neither fully aligned with the regime nor had it revealed any sympathy towards the uprising yet. It was rather still acting as a passive player in the ongoing discourse, and this dissociated it from the two conflicting framing processes. The Sheikh's appeasing tone regarding the army, however, held special significance, as it revealed his exclusion of the military institution from his (and al-Jazeera's) efforts to delegitimize the regime. As for his vision of "a new Egypt" with alternative political possibilities, al-Qaradawi endorses democracy and shura as two mechanisms capable of producing different institutional facts that substitute Mubarak's regime structures. The Sheikh, however, does not elaborate on the two mentioned concepts. In former contributions dating back to more than a decade, he explicates that "the tools and guaranties created by democracy are as close as can ever be to the realization of the political principles brought to this world by Islam to put a leash on the ambitions and whims of rulers. These principles are: *shura*, *nasiha* (advice) enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, disobeying illegal orders, resisting unbelief, and changing wrong by force when possible".[283] This merger between Islamic and modern principles is left obscure in most of al-Qaradawi's illuminations on the issue. Similarly, the frameworks he propagates outlining a new social order in Egypt in this excerpt (as well as others) are rather vague. Accordingly, al-Qaradawi's visualization of alternative institutional facts in Egypt is not given priority during the uprising, partly because his central concern was to push for ousting the president prior to anything else, and partly because this was not his specialization, since, as a religious

[283] Deina Ali Abdelkader, *Islamic Activists: the Anti-Enlightenment Democrats* (London: Pluto Press, 2011), 61.

figure, his added value lies in his compelling promotion of motivational frames rather than scientific or objective accounts of a new social order.

In his word to the president, al-Qaradawi presents a clear diagnosis of the problem as one relating to Mubarak himself. He blames the latter for the damages and casualties and insists on his resignation, arguing that leaving office is the means to receive a fair trial rather than a military one. Al-Qaradawi's reference to military courts that Mubarak has "created to sue his opponents" is meant to further motivate his spectators. The deterministic tone he uses regarding the outcomes of the uprising is amplified by his deployment of religious language. His statement about God who "gives respite but never neglects" (preceded by a Quranic verse and followed by another one for the purpose of emphasis) is meant to motivate the audience he claims to be representing, the latter including thousands of religious scholars and clerics who have their own spheres of influence as well. Al-Qaradawi's reliance on Muslim scholars who look up to him eventually collided with the power practiced by al-Azhar and its head, the latter being the religious institution that the regime relies on as a supplementary tool to sustain its legitimacy. The following excerpt demonstrates this collision:

> Al-Qaradawi: I have asked the Sheikh of al-Azhar to side with the people and not their enemies, but unfortunately, he issued a statement today condemning the oppressed rather than the oppressors and saying that those who call for demonstrations do not have an ounce of faith in their hearts. Why do you not say that about those who stand against demonstrations? All what the protesters are asking for is some of their rights. They are asking for freedom and dignity. Is this forbidden? We call upon all Azhari scholars to go down the streets wearing their turbans, to stand with the people, especially on Friday. I call upon the imams and preachers of mosques to go down the streets with the worshipers.[284]

In the excerpt above, al-Qaradawi presents counterframes in response to Sheikh al-Azhar's framing of the upsurge and its activists. Sheikh al-Azhar, Ahmed al-Tayyib, is one of the two highest religious authorities in Egypt (along with the Mufti) and is head

[284] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Al-Qaraḍāwī wa-Khiyānat šayḫ al-Azhar al-Azdar Aḥmad al-ṭayb li-ṯaawrat" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAlW-ffA77c uploaded February 3, 2011, accessed May 1, 2014.

of al-Azhar, the most prominent Islamic institute of religious studies around the world. Al-Qaradawi had always thought of Sheikh al-Azhar as a mere state official, albeit he identified himself as an *Azhari* (he pursued his religious studies in al-Azhar).[285] Contrary to that, he regarded himself as an independent reformist authority. This allegiance of al-Tayyib partly explains their divergent viewpoints regarding Egypt's upsurge: Al-Tayyib denounced the activists and their motives in his framing of events saying they "do not have an ounce of faith in their hearts", whereas al-Qaradawi amplified themes like freedom and dignity, and emphasized their centrality in the social movement's driving purposes.

This excerpt also shows al-Qaradawi's insistence on challenging Egypt's authorities: After asking the president to resign and urging the army to refrain from confronting protesters, he calls upon clerics, preachers, and Azhari scholars to join the demonstrators following Friday's prayers, in an effort to incite rebellion within the state's religious institutions, through openly engaging in a process of motivational framing. Al-Qaradawi's other contributions that served this process of motivation were part and parcel of al-Jazeera's output as an institution, as shall be demonstrated next.

Conclusion

In its coverage of the Egyptian uprising, al-Jazeera invested in the potency of two frame articulators whose commentaries were meant to serve in constructing a revolutionary narrative of events and in promoting it to millions of the channel's spectators inside Egypt and around the Arab World. The social movement in Egypt replicated the Tunisian example and quickly evolved from calling for the downfall of the regime following Friday's Day of Rage to translating its chants to various forms of action, as demonstrators sieged the National Television and the Parliament before heading to the Presidential Palace. All throughout this process, Azmi Bishara was particularly promoting diagnostic and prognostic frames, envisioning scenarios of action and advocating the creation of a different social order, whereas Sheikh Youssef al-

[285] Abdelkader, *Islamic Activists*, 30, 51.

Qaradawi engaged in presenting motivational frames, as he deployed religious texts to incite protesters and urge them to endure security measures and persist until they oust President Mubarak.

Both intellectuals aimed at the Egyptian regime after defining it and called for deconstructing the system of power relations directly associated with the president. Thus they insisted that, for change to be meaningful and for revolutionary demands to be realized, it was necessary to replace the constitution with a new one that legitimizes a different form of governance. This, however, required the army's support and a vision of the future that is inclusive of both, the military and judiciary bodies, as well as of some former political elites. It was therefore important to address these different institutions using a variety of tones. Whilst regime figures like the president and the vice president were demeaned, the army was addressed with an appeasing tone and was called upon to guarantee a transitional democracy. State institutions were thus distinguished from regime power structures and the latter were separately depicted as targets of the desired change. Al-Jazeera's intellectuals framed the discourse accordingly and complemented the network's intensive coverage with various forms of meaning construction as they promoted alternative political possibilities. Thus the channel, as an entity, functioned as an institutional organic intellectual, or, in Gramscian terms, as a permanent persuader rather than just a simple orator.

Chapter 5

Al-Jazeera's Intellectual Output and Deconstructing the Libyan State

This chapter argues that the elements distinguishing the case of Libya from that of Egypt allowed al-Jazeera's intellectuals to attain a more active role in deconstructing all institutional facts sustained by the Libyan regime, including the state's institutional facts themselves. The mentioned elements comprise of inherent features that characterize Gaddafi's regime, as well as intervening variables that altered the course of the Libyan uprising and set a discursive pattern that fundamentally differs from that witnessed in Egypt. The engagement of al-Jazeera's intellectuals with the uprising in Libya accordingly followed a different path; not only were those intellectuals promoting revolutionary frames and shaping anti-regime discourse, but also taking part in formulating regime alternatives and concretely crystallizing these alternatives on the ground. Al-Jazeera and its intellectuals facilitated the creation of the National Transitional Council that seized power in Libya after the downfall of Gaddafi. Its intellectuals' articulations were thus reflective of actual policies rather than mere analysis, speculations, and various forms of framing. Al-Jazeera acted as a medium for maverick change in Libya, using soft power as a means to introduce the deployment of hard power as the uprising militarized. The outlet banked on the features distinguishing Libya's institutional facts from those of Egypt and Tunisia, and its choice of intellectuals and framing tactics accordingly expanded.

The events in Libya succeeded those of neighboring Egypt and Tunisia. On February 14, 2011, social media were similarly used to call for anti-regime protests. The arrest of a human rights activist in the eastern city of Benghazi on February 15, ignited riots that security forces responded to with live ammunition. The situation escalated dramatically in the following days, with reports of hundreds of casualties and worldwide condemnations. On February 18, Saif al-Islam, the son of Libyan Leader Mo'ammar

Gaddafi, appeared on television asserting that his father will fight "till the last bullet". Similarly, four days later, Gaddafi vowed to "fight until the last drop of blood is spilt", promising to "die a martyr". Few days after, UN Security Council announced sanctions on Gaddafi and his family, whereas the EU approved a similar decision involving the Leader and his close advisers. Starting March 5, the regime's legitimacy began gradually eroding, as the National Transitional Council (NTC) created by opposition figures declared itself sole representative of Libyans and started seeking international recognition. On March 17, however, 32 days after the uprising's advent, a major development fundamentally changed the local scene, as UN Security Council issued Resolution 1973 authorizing a no-fly zone and "all necessary measures" to protect Libyan civilians.[286]

Al-Jazeera's coverage of the uprising in Libya followed a track similar to that in Egypt during the first days. The outlet's engagement with the event rapidly escalated, however, reaching its zenith prior to the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1973. Gaddafi's regime was different from its overthrown neighbors in Tunisia and Egypt, as it adopted a dogmatic ideology, lacked proper institutional bureaucracies, and was far more centralized and functionally dependent on its *Leader*. Consequently, the engagement of al-Jazeera's intellectuals with the Libyan event focused on targeting the regime's symbolic icons and representations, from its Leader to its malfunctioning bureaucracies operating under the banner of Popular Committees *(Lijan Shabiyya)* that were envisioned in Gaddafi's *Green Book* and *Third Universal Theory*. The intellectuals' framing processes involved overt ridicule and condescending depictions of Gaddafi as a means to disarm him of his allure, discredit his claims, and delegitimize his authority.

Concomitantly, al-Jazeera's usage of intellectuals for promoting diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames, expanded to include Libyan opposition figures who played key roles in establishing alternative realities in the Eastern part of the country,

[286] See al-Sharq al-Awsat online archives (15 February 2011 – 20 March 2011). http://archive.aawsat.com/advsearch.asp.

before seizing power upon the downfall of Gaddafi. Involving local intellectuals was a means to cope with Libya's distinct features and to invest in the militarization of the uprising. Local Libyan intellectuals supplemented Bishara's powerful framing arguments and played a significant role in transforming al-Jazeera's involvement with events. The first of those was Mahmoud Shammam, a Libyan media expert and politician in exile and former member of al-Jazeera's administrative board. Shammam, who later took charge of media relations in the NTC, was given all necessary financial, technical, and logistic facilities by Qatari authorities to launch the first Libyan satellite network supporting the rebels during the uprising under the name *Libya al-Ahrar*.[287] The second was Sleiman Dogha, former head of *al-Ghad Media Corporation* owned by Saif al-Islam in London, and member of the NTC. For al-Jazeera, Dogha, a young articulate journalist in his thirties, was thought to be an adequate representative of the vibrant young generation calling for change.[288] The third and most influential Libyan intellectual was Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi, a Muslim cleric in exile hosted by Qatar since the late 1990s and a member of the Global Union for Muslim Scholars headed by al-Qaradawi.[289] Al-Sallabi held ties with one of the most potent opposition military factions in Libya: The Islamic Fighting Group.

The three Libyan intellectuals invested in the channel's soft power capabilities to acquire credence and employ it in favor of a newly established representative body (NTC). This body legitimized foreign intervention and facilitated the domestic use of hard power by channeling funds and weapons to the rebels. Al-Qaradawi, on the other hand, used al-Jazeera's platform to threaten Gaddafi's personal security as he issued a fatwa during one of the outlet's interviews, calling for his assassination by any Libyan capable of doing so. He and al-Sallabi encouraged Libyan ministers, diplomats, and

[287] This information was provided to the writer by staff members from *Libya al-Ahrar* satellite network during a field trip to Libya in April 2011.

[288] Interview with Osama Radi, former senior producer at al-Jazeera channel. November 2014.

[289] "Ali Sallabi, Sheikh fi Muwajahat Al Kathafi" [Ali Sallabi, a Sheikh Facing Gaddafi] Ittihad Ulama Al Muslimin Website, accessed September 1, 2014, http://www.iumsonline.net/ar/default.asp?ContentID=1039&menuID=13.

army officers to defect from the regime, depicting that as a religious obligation. On several occasions, official Libyan figures were mentioned by name in these calls.

Al-Jazeera promoted intense motivational frames in its coverage of the uprising. Yet Resolution 1973 announced a decline in its impact. Thereafter, its intellectuals' engagements with Libyan events were mostly analytical and descriptive, as NATO's involvement in military operations became the decisive factor in the battle against Gaddafi, vastly outweighing local opposition dynamics and media discourse. Hence, this chapter examines the engagement of al-Jazeera and its intellectuals with the uprising in Libya from its starting days until the Security Council's declaration of Resolution 1973. Its analysis of al-Jazeera's framing processes and promotional campaigns to delegitimize Gaddafi's authority shall be restricted to this timeframe. Yet as previously done in the chapter on Egypt, we shall start by locating our analysis in al-Jazeera's institutional setting. Hence, we present the network's function as an institutional organic intellectual operating within a regional power discourse that Qatar was more vividly part of (in comparison to its involvement in Egypt) before we move to analyzing the output of its intellectuals individually. Thus, since Doha's involvement in the case of Libya was more blatant, highlighting al-Jazeera's institutional contribution to the discourse shall focus on its relation to this involvement rather than on the network's mere journalistic coverage of the Libyan uprising. We therefore need not present any sample reports conveying al-Jazeera's editorial line as we did in the previous chapter, for the channel's active engagement in Libya has surpassed that by far as shall be shown and discussed. Prior to that, however, we shall cast light on Libya's unique institutional facts that provoked a different engagement by the network with the country's uprising.

Libya's unique institutional facts

By Libya's institutional facts, we mean the social realities that have acquired collective recognition by the Libyan community, and that have accordingly gained a specific status and function within a hierarchical social structure and inter-communal power relations. Hence, the country's natural resources and other brute facts do not fall

within the scope of our discussion, neither do the regime's geopolitical position, regional alliances, and international alienation that has facilitated the establishment of a multinational military coalition, un-vetoed at the Security Council, to pave the way for Gaddafi's overthrow. We are rather interested in the Libyan regime's inherent characteristics that have provoked a different form of behavior by al-Jazeera and its intellectuals, if compared to the outlet's former engagement with the uprising in Egypt.

Contrary to Egypt, Libya was a state with massively dysfunctional institutions. Anderson explains that, for decades, Gaddafi "methodically thwarted the development of stable institutions, civil society and economic association - all in the name of permanent revolution".[290] His "constitution", *The Green Book*, lacked clear provisions defining the nature of his regime's structures and the powers they accordingly acquire. As Vandewalle contends, "The Green Book contains the essential idea of *statelessness*, and of people managing their own affairs without state institutions".[291] The book also condemned all forms of political representation, deeming modern state bureaucracies as repressive. Thus, under the title "The Solution of the Problem of Democracy", the book's first part claims that representative parliaments "have become a means of plundering and usurping the people's authority".[292] This explains why no elections were ever held in Libya since Gaddafi's 1969 bloodless coup ousting King Idriss and the Sanussi dynasty.[293]

Gaddafi's denunciation of state bureaucracies rendered them effectively devoid of substantial constitutional powers. The country's military and security institutions were similarly lacking structural hierarchies, and the most effective military brigades were headed by, even named after, Gaddafi's sons. Libya's army was weakened in the few years prior to the uprising as Gaddafi was thought to have feared a military coup

[290] Lisa Anderson, "In Libya after Qaddafi, Scores to Settle", *The New York Times*, August 22, 2011.

[291] Dirk Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 102.

[292] Guy Arnold, *The Maverick State: Gaddafi and the New Order* (Cassel: New York, 1996), 17.

[293] Larbi Sadiki, "Libya's Arab Spring: The Long Road from Revolution to Democracy", *International Studies* 49 (2014): 285-314.

that would oust him from power, especially that several attempts had been formerly staged against him.[294] The Leader's armed forces were comprised of a regular army and elite units, and the latter's best-trained and most equipped were headed by his sons: Moatassim held a leading position in the National Security Council and was in command of a modern brigade, Khamis was in charge of the 32nd Mechanized Brigade responsible for Gaddafi's personal security, Saadi headed the special forces or the 9th Brigade, and Saif al-Islam who was being prepared for succession was able to give military orders even though he did not occupy a formal position, whether military or otherwise.[295] The best-equipped Brigade in Libya's armed forces was that headed by Khamis and popularly named after him. It was estimated to comprise of 10,000 troops supported by mercenaries and was equipped with tanks, artillery, and rocket launchers.[296] Gaddafi also relied on relatives outside the immediate family as well as on members of his tribe, the Gadadfa, and other larger tribes linked to the Gadadfa with blood ties (such as the Wurfala) to fill leading positions in the military and security apparatuses.[297] With such a military formation, it was most likely during the uprising that the army would either fragment (regular army units or parts of them versus elite units, which is what actually happened), or stay entirely loyal to Gaddafi. The Leader's controversial policies and despotic forms of governance throughout his 42 years of rule provoked many attempts to overthrow him through a military coup. Yet his ability to gradually tame the army and appoint his closest confidents in top security and military positions rendered any form of dissent from the military - as an institution - very implausible whether regarding his succession plans or otherwise. The Libyan army was, therefore, mostly a regime institutional fact, in the same way the judicial sector and Popular Committees were. This was a fundamental difference that distinguished the case of Libya from that of Egypt

[294] William C. Taylor, *Military Responses to the Arab Uprisings and the Future of Civil-Military Relations in the Middle East: Analysis from Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Syria* (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2014), 158.

[295] Ibid, 160.

[296] "Profile: Khamis Gaddafi", BBC News, September 4, 2011, accessed July 16, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14723041.

[297] Taylor, *Military Responses to the Arab Uprisings,* 160-161.

prior to the uprisings in both countries, and thus had massive effects on their regimes' reactions to threat and on al-Jazeera's strategy of engagement with these reactions.

The judicial body in Libya, like many other apparatuses, was highly dysfunctional. In fact, one of the main triggers of the uprising was the unresolved case of Abu Salim,[298] a prison where the fate of more than 1200 detainees was concealed for years following their mass execution in 1996. After Gaddafi's 2004 acknowledgement of the massacre and demand that investigations take place, human rights agencies were allowed to visit Libya to carry out their own inquiries yet received no collaboration from state authorities.[299] Contrary to the case of Egypt where political dissent within the state was organized and vocalized through the judicial institution and parliamentary opposition, it was either lacking or of absolutely no effect within Libya's dysfunctional state institutions, as the Popular Committees (Libya's equivalent of the parliament) were organically linked to the regime and its lawful guardians whereas the judicial body was merely of instrumental use. Little wonder, then, that Libya's Minister of Justice Mustapha Abdil Jalil resigned from his position in 2010 due to "his inability to overcome the difficulties facing the judicial sector"[300] before finally defecting from the regime on the eve of the uprising and becoming Chairman of the National Transitional Council representing the rebels.

The country was also marked by an absence of domestic politics and an almost non-existent civil society,[301] as the constitution banned parties, unions, and any form of political assembly, founding that on ideological grounds. Anderson explains that the regime shut down "institutions and places where people might gather outside

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[298] Chorin, *Exit Gaddafi*, 148.

[299] "Libya: June 1996 Killings at Abu Salim Prison", Human Rights Watch, June 27, 2006. http://www.hrw.org/news/2006/06/27/libya-june-1996-killings-abu-salim-prison

[300] "Libya crisis: Profile of NTC Chair Mustafa Abdul Jalil", BBC News, August 22, 2011. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14613679

[301] "Beyond Gaddafi: Libya's Governance Context", Mercy Corps, August 2011, at: https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/beyond_gaddafi_libyas_governance_context.pdf

government supervision" and that this resulted in enhancing the role of "kinship ties [i.e. tribalism] in political organization because it [was] the last available organizational link outside the purview of the ruling authorities".[302] This lack of social organization explains why Libya's upheaval was a sudden outburst and why it was stripped of introductory signs and has therefore resulted in massive unrest that was difficult to contain.

The Libyan regime was also defined by an ideology that was tailored to fit Gaddafi, or *the Leader of the Revolution*. In practice, *the Leader* was iconized and placed above all forms of accountability and questioning, albeit not holding an official position within the regime. In 1975, following a failed coup attempt, the technocrats in the Revolutionary Command Council (the country's ruling council after Gaddafi's takeover) lost much of their influence within the regime's circles whereas the ideologues enhanced their leverage.[303] The ideological character of the regime was then institutionalized on the 1st of September 1978, when Gaddafi announced the separation of the "revolutionary authority" from the "people's authority", and resigned from the General Secretariat of the People's Congress, "leaving it to deal with the everyday business of the country while [he] devoted [himself] to the higher cause of furthering the revolution".[304] This ideology that dominated all state activities and heavily revolved around idiosyncrasies rather than institutions, made the country's main institutional facts, from the constitution to state apparatuses and agencies, contingent on Gaddafi's fluctuating convictions and perceptions of the world, his state, and his society.

With no institutional constraints to Gaddafi's powers, the regime's reaction to the popular unrest in eastern Libya was blatant and fierce. Henceforth, the non-violent uprising mutated into a military upheaval that extended till Gaddafi's death in his hometown Sirt, more than 8 months after its outburst. Yet this only occurred after

[302] Lisa Anderson, "Qadhdhafi and his Opposition", *Middle East Journal*, 40 (1986), 228.

[303] Ibid, 231.

[304] Alison Pargeter, *Libya The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 95-96.

foreign intervention tilted the balance in favor of militant rebels. The distinguishing elements in this pattern of events impacted al-Jazeera's coverage. This impact manifested itself in the outlet's reference to local intellectuals having well-established public relations inside Libya and acting in collaboration with the Qatari regime. The intellectuals' forms of framing were coupled with attempts to alter institutional facts, as in the case of their compliance with NTC's strategies and of al-Qaradawi's *fatwa* to assassinate Gaddafi. Accordingly, and contrary to the case of Egypt, al-Jazeera promoted the need for a complete deconstruction of state institutional facts, as any sort of reform was thought to be superficial if done within the ideological constraints of a regime that renounces representation in the first place. Thus, for collective intentionality to be restored, institutional facts repudiating representation and enforcing an idiosyncratic form of governance ought to be dismantled along with their supportive narrative and rationale, and alternative ones ought to be constructed over their rubble, as al-Jazeera's intellectuals insisted on various occasions.

Re-inventing institutional facts

In a series of six interviews with *al-Hayat* newspaper, Mahmoud Jibril, the chair of the executive board of NTC and first interim prime minister of Libya following Gaddafi's downfall, gave his account regarding the establishment of the opposition's council. Jibril, a politician and academic, had previously served as the head of the National Planning Council of Libya founded by the regime, before resigning from his position prior to the uprising. He narrates that, in the early days of the regime's crackdown on protests, he consulted with Minister of Justice Mustafa Abdel Jalil (later head of NTC) and Libya's ambassador in New Delhi and former Minister of Economy Ali al-Issawi (later in charge of NTC's foreign relations) about creating an opposition body that voices the uprising. [305]

[305] Ghassan Charbil, "Ṣaḥīfat al-Ḥayāt fī ḥiwār maʿa Mahmūd Jibrīl" [Al-Hayat newspaper in an interview with Mahmoud Jibril], *al-Ḥayāt,* February 1, 2014.

Jibril explains that as soon as Qatar's position regarding the uprising became clear, he called Wadah Khanfar, the Director General of al-Jazeeera, whom he got to know during his work as a consultant when he "set the organizational framework of al-Jazeera and trained its senior administrators including Waddah". Jibril, who had announced his support for protesters, hoped that Khanfar would connect him to the Qatari leadership and asked if the latter might be willing to offer him sanctuary. Within few hours, he asserts, he got called back and informed that he was welcome to reside in Qatar. Jibril explains that, henceforth, Doha became the destination for many Libyan figures escaping from Gaddafi.[306]

Jibril narrates that he met with the Emir of Qatar 48 hours following his arrival to Doha. His connection with high-ranking Qatari officials was facilitated by one of al-Jazeera's regular guests, Mahmoud Shammam, on later occasions. Within few weeks, he explains, the Qatari leadership established multiple channels with various Libyan opposition figures and groups. Jibril argues, however, that the Qataris favored Islamists very early on. He asserts that Doha cooperated with him and NTC's head, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, yet the unofficial, more effective channel of collaboration (in terms of financial and military aid), was that established with Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi (al-Jazeera's regular Islamist guest), and head of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Abdel Hakim Belhaj.[307]

Jibril's account serves to highlight a connection between al-Jazeera's Libyan intellectuals and political developments on the ground. It underscores their dual role of frame construction through a powerful media outlet on the one hand, and political activism that helped create new realities on the other. Al-Jazeera's intellectuals have thus engaged in a process of deconstructing institutional facts by promoting frames that challenged Gaddafi's credence and legitimacy, then followed that with contributing to the construction of new institutional facts in regions under rebel control. Both parts of

[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid.

the process were intertwined in the sense that one was introductory to the other: the network's guests utilized its communication tools to deconstruct the regime's existing institutional facts before imagining, reinventing, and propagating the construction of new realities over the rubble of the old ones.

Dismantling Gaddafi's institutional facts took several forms as earlier demonstrated. Various methods of framing were deployed to diagnose the problem and motivate for change, thus contributing to disarming the regime of the element of collective recognition. As prognosis for possible solutions was presented, alternative realities were imagined and promoted, including the interim NTC, an institutionalized rebel army, and a new flag. Concomitantly, al-Jazeera's influential religious scholars, Youssef al-Qaradawi and Ali al-Sallabi, threw their weight behind efforts to physically eliminate or void the regime's most potent institutional facts. This was precisely the case when al-Qaradawi issued a *fatwa* for assassinating Gaddafi, and when both called army officers to defect from the regime. The following excerpts demonstrate the aforementioned:

> Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi: I call upon the ministers whom I know to curse him. I want the ambassadors around the world to renounce this regime and to withdraw from it. I say to the officers around Gaddafi, God says "And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is Hell, abiding therein, and the wrath and curse of Allah are upon him, and a grievous chastisement shall be prepared for him". I hereby address the Libyan army, and I do not believe it is less patriotic and conscious than the Tunisian army that has declined Ben Ali's request for protection, or than the Egyptian army that was asked by Mubarak to open fire on protesters yet refused to do so. I call upon it to refrain from assaulting its people. Who would assault his people for a crazy man? I call upon my brothers and sons, the leaders, officers, and soldiers of the Libyan army to refrain from obeying orders. Obeying orders here is *haram.* The prophet says "a person should be obedient [to his seniors] whether he likes it or not as long as he is not ordered to commit sin". If you're ordered to bomb your people with airplanes, say no. Aim for the one who gave you those orders instead. I hereby issue a *fatwa* for officers and soldiers: he who gets the chance to kill Gaddafi, let him do it and relieve the country

and the people from him.[308]

> Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi: I call upon the Free Officers, specifically Major-General Mustafa al-Kharroubi: What is your stance regarding the current situation? I also call upon Lieutenant General Abu Bakr Younes Jaber: What is your stand regarding the current happenings? Are you siding with Gaddafi or with the people? What is your position Khuweildi al-Hmaidi concerning these events? Those are members of the Revolutionary Command Council and they have influence and respect amongst many officers. You are standing before historical crossroads: Either you stand by your people or you go into the dustbin of history along with Gaddafi and his sons… We want defection from the army and liberation of Tripoli from this invasion… The Libyans say they love martyrdom in the name of God. We love it in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Palestine. I call upon those who have the ability to carry weapons and train to collaborate with their brothers in order to thwart [Gaddafi's] mercenaries.
>
> The Gadadhfa tribe, like all others, will join the rest of the people, God willing, and will reject this miserable criminal who got the invaders to their country. The Gadadfha are responsible before God. They are accountable before their country and before history. Mo'ammar Gaddafi and his sons have distorted the history of the Gadadhfa. We hope they write a new page. We are counting on this tribe to dissociate itself from the head of [the Libyan] regime and its security brigades. You must not open fire at your brothers. I call upon them to join their people in this great revolution.[309]

Al-Qaradawi's *fatwa* religiously legitimized killing the Leader and thus posed an actual threat to his life. It was more than a form of prognostic framing, as not only did it propose eliminating the central institutional fact (the Leader) that provides the rest of the regime's social constructs with legitimacy, but coupled that with a sense of religious duty and obligation, and this, in theory, has substantial impact amidst conservative social strata. Al-Qaradawi's religious leverage was thus incorporated in al-Jazeera's formula aiming to target Gaddafi's image and allure and to help in physically annihilating him. Much the same result was intended through aiming at two of the regime's other

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[308] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Al-Duktūr Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī muʻalliqan ʻalā mā yajrī fī Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bp7h644lTH4 uploaded February 21, 2011, accessed October 17, 2014.

[309] Al-Ṣallābī, ʻAlī. "Taʻlīq al-šayḫ ʻAlī al-Ṣalābī ʻalā aḥdāṯ Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D6CdE3WWd0 uploaded February 25, 2011, accessed November 15, 2014.

institutional facts: the army and the diplomatic body. Accordingly, both al-Qaradwi and al-Sallabi encouraged defection, depicting any form of collaboration and obedience to Gaddafi's regime as *haram*. Quranic verses were deployed to emphasize the outcomes of such collaboration in Islamic narrative and belief. Thus, as opposed to the possible price that rebels have to pay (martyrdom) and religious gains they would acquire (heaven), Gaddafi proponents await a different fate that Quranic texts describe in terms of severe punishment (hell).

When compared to al-Qaradawi, al-Sallabi's added value pertains to his personal connections - as a Libyan - and his knowledge of Libyan politics. In the extract above, he addresses Libyan army officers by name, asking them to make a stance and choose between "standing by the people" or joining Gaddafi "in the dustbin of history". He also addresses the Gadadfa tribes, where Gaddafi originates from, with the aim to provoke dissent in the Leader's tribal circles. In a community where the number of tribes is estimated by 140, 30 of which are considered significant,[310] tribal affiliations are a double-edged sword that both the regime and its antagonists used to rally support. Tribal allegiances were emphasized in many of the speeches of Gaddafi and Saif al-Islam. The latter even warned of a scenario where members of "different tribes would kill each other in the streets" if protests persisted.[311] Yet the most significant of al-Sallabi's connections were the ones he maintained with the "Islamic Fighting Group". Comprising of former jihadists who fought in Afghanistan and opposed the regime in Libya, the group was considered to be one of the powerful militant actors during the conflict. In his interview with *al-Hayat*'s mentioned earlier, the head of NTC's executive board Mahmoud Jibril contends that Qatar's main support was offered to al-Sallabi and the head of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, Abdel Hakim Belhaj. Al-Sallabi never denied the robust connections he maintained with the group. In one of his

[310] Peter Apps, "Factbox: Libya's tribal, cultural divisions", Reuters, August 25, 2011, accessed August 13, 2014, http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/25/us-libya-tribes-idUSTRE77O43R20110825

[311] Mohammad Hussein, "Libya crisis: What role do tribal loyalties play?", *BBC News,* 21 February 2011, at: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12528996

interviews, he states that Libyan officials asked him to urge the faction's militants to negotiate with the regime, yet he refused:

> Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi: The people shall triumph over Gaddafi, his sons, and this wretched regime. [The Libyan authorities] contacted me [in order to facilitate] dialogue and negotiations, due to my old relationship with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group. But it has been agreed upon between religious scholars and students, in Libya and abroad, to discard this option. I see this great ordeal as a chance for the Libyans to obtain a modern civil state with a social contract and with freedoms, unions, and associations. I can see Libyans getting rid of poverty, God willing.[312]

The aforementioned means that the framing processes presented on al-Jazeera were interlinked with the actual deconstruction of Libyan institutional facts and construction of alternative realities. Al-Sallabi's links with an Islamist militant group fighting against Gaddafi, in addition to Shammam joining the NTC along with Dogha, are elements that uncover the role of al-Jazeera's intellectuals in materially aiding the uprising. The role played by al-Jazeera's managing director, Wadah Khanfar, in linking NTC's founders with the Qatari Emir, was also essential in allowing NTC to obtain early political, financial, military, and media support. On al-Jazeera, this support translated into a form of concentrated media coverage and powerful motivational frames. Al-Jazeera gave the Libyan uprising utmost priority, as its intellectuals were hosted on its main bulletins on a regular basis even months after the outset of protests.[313] The channel's role, however, was most powerful prior to the protest's militarization, as it engaged in a heavy promotional campaign emphasizing the need to establish an anti-regime representative body that creates its own subordinate institutional facts and seeks collective recognition. Consider the following extracts from a variety of al-Jazeera interviews with Azmi Bishara:

> Azmi Bishara: The current regime, or non-regime, will end. The country

[312] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D6CdE3WWd0 uploaded February 25, 2011, accessed November 15, 2014.

[313] Interview with al-Jazeera senior presenter that was granted to the author on condition of anonymity. October 2014.

should not be left in a state of vacuum and [the rebels] should be ready [in terms of having a] constitutional assembly and founding documents. This is neither Tunisia nor Egypt, where the state has submitted to the rebels' demands and a process of *bargaining* [term used in English] still continues while demonstrations persist to achieve the [desired] change.[314]

Azmi Bishara: This is not the flag of [Libya's former king] Sannousi as he claims. This flag was approved by a constitutional committee for Libya's independence. Notice how much they [the rebels] refuse chaos. They want to even get rid of the flag. This is a real and full-fledged revolution. Full-fledged revolutions create vacuum and vacuum is dangerous. Therefore, in the liberated areas, judicial and security institutions must materialize… The problem is that [overthrowing Gaddafi] is going to be costly. Demonstrations are not enough here. The remnants of the Libyan army that he has dismantled must assemble again. The main concern is whether [the rebels are able to] build an army capable of controlling the areas that have been liberated.[315]

Azmi Bishara: Where does politics begin in this age? It begins with the people. For the Libyan people, the lieutenant's [Gaddafi's] rule has lost its legitimacy. This cannot be negotiated, neither with France nor the Arab League, the African Union, or the opposition abroad, precisely that which was betting on Saif al-Islam… The people are the base [of legitimacy], then comes the [regional] milieu. The issue of legitimacy has been settled on the level of the Libyan people. Gaddafi should not be offered vents. Overreliance on the West has created a sense of laxity amongst the rebels… This is not a spontaneous battle. It is not fought form the studios. As a leader, you should find the means to train and arm the rebels. I have no doubt that the National Council will gain legitimacy and it already has. The Arab League has practically offered it legitimacy. Now is the time when it should start acting as an entity responsible for its people.[316]

In the extracts above, Bishara emphasizes the need to bear several factors in mind for a successful transition to take place from Gaddafi's rule to a new historical

[314] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-ḫāmis .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5q6Z1PRsZw uploaded February 21, 2011, accessed November 8, 2014.

[315] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-sādis .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtITEddBokE uploaded February 22, 2011, accessed November 1, 2014.

[316] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-25 .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FG_ApSUFASg uploaded March 13, 2011, accessed November 20, 2014.

phase. He stresses the danger of vacuum following the disintegration of the Libyan regime and its patterns of governance. There is thus a need to fill this vacuum by establishing alternative institutional facts, for the struggle had already taken the shape of a "full-fledged" revolution that would dismantle the existing social order. Contrary to the case of Egypt, the uprising's *revolutionary* character in Libya was more coherent, as it was meant to completely detach from past modes of governance. Bishara contends it was therefore necessary to create judicial and security institutions in areas under rebel control. A founding document and a constitutional assembly should also be established to design a new social contract over the remnants of the Green Book. Bishara's account implies that all social constructs that were part of the country's ruling system for over four decades were intrinsically prone to obstruct change, and alternatives were thus urgently needed to fill the expected gaps in a collapsing system of power.

In the third excerpt, Bishara argues that legitimacy is first gained domestically, as the Libyans offer their acceptance (collective intentionality) of a new representative body responsible for formulating an alternative social order (or set of institutional facts). Thereafter, this body - the National Transitional Council - should seek regional recognition and start acting in accordance to its newly accredited role. The non-regime in Libya, or that which has introduced the idea of statelessness, had to be eradicated, from its symbolic institutional facts (such as the country's green flag) to that topping its hierarchical structure of power (the Leader). Establishing new forms of legitimacy to replace the regime's disintegration was a theme also emphasized by al-Jazeera's other intellectuals during their interviews at different times, as the following extracts reveal:

> Sheikh Ali al-Sallabi: I call upon the Libyans to organize a national conference that forms a constitutional assembly, one that could fill the vacuum after Gaddafi's downfall. Gaddafi is over. This is only a matter of time.[317]
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> Sheikh Ali Sallabi: I think that, after the National Transitional Council

[317] Al-Ṣallābī, al-Šayḫ ʻAlī. "Al-Šayḫ ʻAlī al-Ṣalābī yarfuḍ al-tadaḫḫul al-ajnabī al-ʻaskarī fī Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0g7iSucPEs uploaded February 26, 2011, accessed November 12, 2014.

> obtained recognition, it now has a right to acquire tools that allow it to protect its people from Gaddafi's war machinery.[318]
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> Mahmoud Shammam: I want to emphasize two points here: The domestic legitimacy cannot be derived from abroad, and this council has domestic legitimacy, as it represents all shades of the political and geographic spectrum. The outside world [i.e. international community] will accordingly show confidence in the council's ability to regulate the country's affairs… The council has emphasized its transitional and interim nature. When Libya regains its unity and becomes secure, general elections will be held. We should emphasize that future Libya will be a country of freedom, democracy, a constitution, law, and separation of powers. We have fought Gaddafi [in order to achieve] all this; so that we build a state of law and not a state of chaos.[319]
>
> Sleiman Dogha: We do not want to repeat the wrongdoings of the Libyan regime by arresting people in an illegal manner, nor do we want to be abusive. Even members of the Revolutionary Committees will have a place in the new Libya. This is how Libya should be.[320]

In the excerpts above, the idea of collective recognition has been engaged with and thought of as the building block of Libya's future institutional facts. In the first excerpt, al-Sallabi stresses the need to establish a constitutional assembly in order to avoid vacuum following the regime's predicted collapse, and in the second, he contends that the NTC should make use of its international recognition to obtain tools for self-defense. Thus, in the course of prognostic framing, al-Sallabi thinks of creating an army as a necessary step for sustaining the rebels' newly established structures, and depicts the rebel's army itself as an institutional fact whose function is to "protect the people". Shammam similarly accents the idea that domestic legitimacy is the base for international support, and that the country's future should be that of a constitution and institutions (separation of powers). He also emphasizes NTC's representation of

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[318] Al-Ṣallābī, ʻAlī. "Mudākhilat al-Duktūr ʻAlī al-Ṣalābī" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnY42sbPZNo uploaded April 13, 2011, accessed October 15, 2014.

[319] Al-Shammām, Maḥmūd. "Kalima A. Maḥmūd Shammām ʻan al-majlis al-intiqālī 2011/03/05" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUFKfuOUhIY uploaded March 6, 2011, accessed November 10, 2014.

[320] Dūğa, Sulaymān. "Sulaymān Dūğa wa taʻlīq ʻan dawr Ahmad Qaḏḏāf al-dam wa-nishātih fī Miṣr" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWZJNsFnHko uploaded April 24, 2011, accessed October 10, 2014.

collective intentionality, as he claims that it reflects "all shades of the political and geographic spectrum". Yet he highlights the council's interim nature to assert that this intentionality shall properly manifest itself through elections once a new social order allowing the creation of representative bodies is established. Likewise, in his commentary, Dogha contends that a new Libya should be founded on collective consent rather than marginalization, one that does not exclude Gaddafi loyalists who accept the emergence of a system of representation with new institutional facts.

The evolution of the Libyan discourse and the role of al-Jazeera and its intellectuals in it passed through different phases, most of which were intertwined and chronologically overlapping. For that reason, and because the case of Libya involved five intellectuals rather than two, it makes more sense to highlight this evolution from a strictly thematic perspective in order to maintain its coherence. In the following, we shall start from the role of al-Jazeera's intellectuals in de-iconizing the model of Gaddafi's regime.

De-iconizing the model: The Leader and Tawreeth

On the fourth day of the uprising, Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, gave a televised speech in which he vowed to fight the rebels till the very end. Saif al-Islam emerged on Libya's domestic scene in the late 1990s as head of the Gaddafi International Foundation for Charitable Associations. In reality, this was his gateway to Libyan politics as a "reformist" representing "civil society", and, at the same time, as the future heir of Mo'ammar Gaddafi.[321] Although usually depicted as a reformist, Saif often promoted himself as someone calling for fundamental change. In this regard, he once claimed that he "wants shock therapy, to destroy everything and build it back up, and not to waste time". Contrary to that, and in what seemed to be a division of labor and a means to praise his father at the same time, he described the latter "as a utopian, leading a state like the wise man in a village", and depicted him as someone "in favor of gradual

[321] Alison Pargeter, "Libya: Reforming the Impossible", *Review of African Political Economy* 33:108 (2007), 219-235.

reform".[322]

Saif al-Islam's appearance on television to speak on behalf of the regime was an easy target to aim at by al-Jazeera's intellectuals. In theory, the fact that he never held an official title or position within the regime meant that he lacked a representative status allowing him to engage with the issue as an authority. Saif was responding to the outbreak of chaos in parts of east Libya, as thousands of protesters were calling for the downfall of the regime, burning down the radio station of Benghazi and reportedly dismantling a statue representing the Green Book, the iconized summary of Gaddafi's political ideology, in Tobruk.[323] As people were demolishing Gaddafi's institutional facts on the ground, Saif's unorthodox televised intervention provided substance for criticism. Azmi Bishara rebuked his appearance in principle, deeming it as an impeccable example of the absence of legitimacy:

> Azmi Bishara (Commenting on Saif al-Islam's speech minutes before airing): We have a case of tawreeth here, and in all the cases of tawreeth in the Arab World, there is a division of roles, whereby the son who is to inherit the republic presents himself as a reformist aiming to fight corruption. Yet the mere fact that he is the only one allowed to engage with the issue of corruption is a form of corruption in itself. Had anyone else been as critical as he was, this person would have been butchered or thrown in jail.[324]
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> Azmi Bishara (Commenting on Saif al-Islam's speech on the following day): One has the feeling that he owns the country as if it were a farm. How could one explain the appearance of someone with no official status [to address the Libyan people]? *The Leader's son!* What kind of status is

[322] Lisa Anderson, "Rogue Libya's Long Road", *Middle East Report*, 241 (2006), 47.

[323] "Libya: suqūt 50 qatīlan wa-akthār min 200 jarīḥ fī ištibāqat damīya bayn al-amn wa-munāwi'in li-l-Qaḏḏāfī" [Libya: 50 Dead and 200 wounded in bloody clashes between the security and dissidents of Gaddafi], *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, February 19, 2011.

[324] Bišāra, Dr. 'Azmī. "Ṯawrat al-ša'b fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-rābi' .. Dr. 'Azmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aE1FVLtdOw uploaded February 20, 2011, accessed October 12, 2014.

this? Even in monarchies there is a crown prince![325]

Contrary to Egypt, where political activists and local media had openly engaged with the issue of tawreeth since 2005, this topic in Libya was taboo. Al-Jazeera's intellectuals highlighted the role of Gaddafi's sons during the upheaval on multiple occasions to illustrate the need for real bureaucracies in a state with malfunctioning institutional facts. The power that each of Gaddafi's sons held in the country, despite lacking any form of official political status, was a striking example of the absence of a proper constitutional order. Azmi Bishara banked on this deficiency to stress Gaddafi's lack of credence, especially when it comes to his revolutionary rhetoric. The issue of tawreeth was thus raised in the course of counterframing and was used as an obvious example negating all claims of progression and egalitarian rule. In the above commentary, however, Bishara's reference to the issue was coupled with de-iconizing the main institutional fact legitimizing all others, which, in Libya's case, was *the Leader*.

The Leader is a socially constructed institutional fact in the sense that it had emerged as a status during Gaddafi's 42-year rule, and, through coercive means, has established and maintained collective recognition. Its function was to guide a "revolutionary" society in accordance with The Green Book. This function extended to all vital decision making processes in Libya, whether local or foreign. The Leader himself is the author of The Green Book that he once described as "the gospel of the modern age and the masses".[326] Through this circle of legitimacy, Gaddafi positioned himself above all other domestic institutional facts: he is the founder of the Third Universal Theory portrayed in his Green Book and its protector at the same time, and this "universal theory", he contends, is a "firm and unchangeable truth".[327] Former Libyan Minister Ibrahim Kuwaider who served in Gaddafi's governments in the 1980s,

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[325] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-sādis .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtITEddBokE uploaded February 22, 2011, accessed November 1, 2014.

[326] Pargeter, *Libya the rise and fall of Qaddafi*, 91.

[327] Geoff Simons, *Libya: The struggle for survival* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1996) 219.

asserts that the Leader was superior to all institutions and laws. He explains that Gaddafi's verbal orders to ministers and other bureaucrats effectively had the power of written legal provisions, and that Libyan officials came to recognize this as a norm whose breach causes severe penalties.[328]

Anderson contends that Gaddafi's reference to his Green Book as "the new gospel" is quite revealing of the ideology he adopts and promotes. She explains that, "despite his unorthodox Islam, Gaddafi's politics were still inextricably linked with religion. He wished for his ideology, which might have easily been described as a philosophy, a manifesto, or a call to arms, the extrapolitical legitimacy conferred by religious referents".[329] Accordingly, the Leader's political rationale was above the realm of politics and outside the margins of criticism, and his "high command" had to be obeyed in order to secure the "revolution" and the welfare of "the people". He was the main source of legitimacy in Libya, whereas all other domestic legitimacies were of a subordinate status and were naturally contingent and reliant on the Leader himself.

Al-Jazeera, as well as other Arab networks supporting the rebels, sought to de-iconize the Leader. Disarming his status of collective intentionality required deconstructing this institutional fact (the Leader) in the minds of proponent or hesitant spectators. For this, al-Jazeera's guests were keen on deploying derogatory depictions of Gaddafi, ridiculing his ideas and actions, and overtly doubting his sanity. Bishara's comments on Gaddafi's speech on the 6th day provides a good example, as he highlights the Leader's expressions reflecting his megalomania, and sheds light on his contradictions to discredit his rationale, namely regarding his constant condescending reference to rebels as rats and mercenaries, and his vow that millions of his proponents

[328] Interview with Ibrahim Kuwaider, former Libyan Ministry of Youth and Sports. June 2011.

[329] Lisa Anderson, "Religion and State in Libya: the Politics of Identity", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 483 (1986), 68.

from around the globe shall support him in the "peaceful cleansing" of Benghazi:[330]

> Azmi Bishara: Regarding his obsessive tendency to describe himself, I think he is doing the job of a psychiatrist. Rarely have we seen a case of this sort, where nothing deters a person from expressing his innermost thoughts. Usually, normal people lay down on a couch and a psychiatrist extracts information from them. In his case, [Gaddafi] voluntarily gives away information. For instance, one needs time to diagnose a case of megalomania. [Gaddafi] says "I am glory, I am history, and I am a deaf rock". The absence of deterrence and extent of narcissism show that he does not care about his listeners and that, to him, the *spectacle* [term used in English] element overshadows that of content.
>
> He does not coordinate his thoughts. They come out abruptly. "If you want a constitution, we can design a constitution" [quoting Gaddafi]. He confesses that there is a need for reform. If the country requires reform, this means the demands are just and that those [rebels] are not rats. On the one hand he denies the presence of mercenaries, and on the other he announces that he shall come with all the nations of the earth.[331]

Al-Qaradawi used a similar language during a phone interview with al-Jazeera, following a report on regime airstrikes targeting Benghazi on the same day. The Sheikh ridiculed Gaddafi's theories, and expanded his skepticism regarding his sanity to include his son, Saif al-Islam, who had addressed the Libyans via television a day earlier. Al-Qaradawi's attempt to disparage Saif al-Islam deployed religious depictions. By replacing *Islam* in his name (literally meaning sword of Islam) with the term *Jahiliyya,* the Sheik implied a comparison between the latter's domestic policies and those witnessed in the pre-Islam era of Jahiliyya*,* branded in Islamic narratives as a time of ignorance and brutality.

> Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi: I do not want to address Gaddafi, for a person addresses others when they are rational, and this man is no more

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330 "Al-Qaḏḏāfī yaṣif al-mutaẓāhirīn bi-l-jirthān… wa yuṣdir awāmirahu li-l-ḍubbāṭ al-aḥrār li-l-qaḍā'a 'alayhim", [Gaddafi describes protesters as mercenaries and gives his orders to the "Free Officers" to abolish them] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* 23 February, 2011.

331 Bišāra, Dr. 'Azmī. "Ṯawrat al-ša'b fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-sādis .. Dr. 'Azmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtITEddBokE uploaded February 22, 2011, accessed November 1, 2014.

> rational. He has always been described as crazy. We have seen how he [presents himself as] a philosopher like Marx and Mao Zedong [and how he claims he has a] "third universal theory". We have seen his absurd and ridiculous behavior at the Arab summits, and on other occasions wearing his colorful outfits and carrying his tent all around the world (…) I thought his son, Saif al-Islam, would be more rational and more of a believer. He turned out to be a sword of *Jahiliyya* [rather than a sword of Islam], as he wants to push the people to fight each other.[332]

To further highlight Gaddafi's unstable personality, al-Jazeera hosted a psychoanalyst who presented his analysis of the Leader's looks and actions, from his dress code and hairstyle, to his use of terminology. The analyst was keen on asserting that Gaddafi's constant reference to rebels as addicts to hallucinogens is a projection of his own condition on others, adding - in a semi-sarcastic tone - that temporary insanity, as in the case of Gaddafi, does not drop penal liability.

The impact of de-iconizing the Leader was evident in the cities of eastern Libya after rebel forces ceased control. Graffiti representing Gaddafi in the most demeaning way were executed on the walls of Benghazi, Tobruk, and other neighboring cities. Often, al-Jazeera's slogan was drawn as a sign of challenge to the regime as well.[333] Disarming Gaddafi of his allure helped protesters break the wall of fear that had been maintained for decades under his rule. In al-Jazeera's studios, disparaging portrayals were frequently insinuated while offering various forms of framing and analysis. The following extract illustrates how Mahmoud Shammam, whilst urging the regime's diplomats to resign after the prime minister's resignation and flee to Italy, depicted Gaddafi as a warlord, and described him as a lunatic.

> Mahmoud Shammam: Gaddafi has lost popular legitimacy after three quarters of Libya was freed. He is also losing international legitimacy as diplomats and ambassadors resign all over the world. This means that he is officially a warlord now. The prime minister was supposed to rule, but

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[332] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Kalimat al-Šayḫ al-Qaraḍāwī bidāyat ṯawra Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rw6ossHIHk8 uploaded February 20, 2011, accessed December 5, 2014.

[333] These are observations by the writer during a field trip to Libya in April 2011. The trip was organized for journalistic purposes. Video footage of the mentioned is available.

> he escaped with his family to Italy. Gaddafi's sons, the small warlords, are all he has now. I call upon the Gaddadfa tribe and tell them you know well that this man has killed his cousin Hassan Shakkal, and that he has displaced and killed many of you. Your neighbors from the tribes of Suleiman warn you from listening to this lunatic![334]

Gaddafi and his sons were repetitively portrayed as warlords. Yet this was not only for purposes of mere disparagement, but also a promotion of this diagnostic frame. The term, as other similar ones, was used to replace the representations that Gaddafi had managed to sustain in his community throughout his four-decade rule. The aim of this technique was to dismantle existing institutional facts – the Leader being one of them - by deconstructing the rationale upon which they stand. On occasions, drawing comparisons between Gaddafi's regime and other forms of oligarchy served a double purpose. On the one hand, it was meant to discredit his claims of legitimacy, and on the other, it implied that the regime that Gaddafi had always promoted as progressive, was the most regressive of all. Such was the case when Bishara credited monarchies that, contrary to Gaddafi's regime, had clear norms and structures governing power transition.

> Azmi Bishara: We're not facing a monarchy here. A monarchy has a structure, norms, tradition, and ethics. It has a *lineage* [term used in English] derived from certain communal values linking the family to the regime and society. Some people accept this and some don't. But it has a structure. A crown prince is a crown prince. Here we have his sons and their militias rather than a national army. We do not have protests that maintain restraint until the army joins [the people]. Those are warlords, each heading a battalion.[335]

Gaddafi's behavioral patterns were indeed the highlight of news outlets around the world. The Libyan leader was seen to have a borderline personality whereby he "swings from intense anger to euphoria", and "when under stress he can dip below the

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[334] Al-Shammām, Maḥmūd. "Kalima A. Maḥmūd Shammām 'an al-majlis al-intiqālī 2011/03/05" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUFKfuOUhIY uploaded March 6, 2011, accessed November 10, 2014.

[335] Bišāra, Dr. 'Azmī. "Ṯawrat al-ša'b fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-23 .. Dr. 'Azmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcdmLTHji_w uploaded March 11, 2011, accessed October 3, 2014.

border and his perceptions can be distorted and his judgment faulty".[336] On various occasions, al-Jazeera's intellectuals offered counterframes to the Leader's desperate attempts to polish his tarnished image and shaky authority. The extent of provocation that Arab media had caused him, especially the two most prominent, Qatar's al-Jazeera and KSA's al-Arabiya, was evident in his speeches, particularly the very first one that lasted no more than 30 seconds on February 22 - one day after Saif al-Islam's televised appearance - and that was followed by a longer speech few hours later. In the short video, Gaddafi addressed the Libyans from a vehicle, referring to satellite networks as "stray dogs", and denying their allegations about his escape from Libya,[337] whereas in his longer statement, he accused Qatar of standing against him rather than siding with him and warned the little Emirate of regretting its new stance.[338] Saif al-Islam, on his part, accused Arab countries of "conspiring against Libya" by deploying "poisonous media that disseminate lies and rumors".[339] Given the Leader's accusative tone regarding Qatar and the fact that al-Jazeera was effectively the only media presence in Libya during the first weeks of the uprising,[340] and that Gaddafi's forces targeted its team in the outskirts of Benghazi killing one of its members on March 23,[341] it makes sense to assume that the Qatari channel was the main outlet referred to in Gaddafi's reproach.

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[336] Jerrold Post, "Qaddafi Under Siege", *Foreign Policy*, March 15, 2011.

[337] "Al-Qaḏḏāfī yaḥbis anfas al-'alam wa-muwātinih fī aṣrā' muqābala fī tārīkhih", [Gaddafi Holds the Breath of his People and the World in the Fastest Interview in his History] *al-sharq al-Awsat*. February 23, 2011.

[338] "Aqwā wa a'naf laqṭa fī ḫiṭāb al-Qaḏḏāfī" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8u7ycr83SQ uploaded in February 22, 2011, accessed May 20, 2015.

[339] Khaled Mahmoud, Mina al-Areibi, and Sawsan Abu Hussein "Al-Qaḏḏāfī yatawassal li kaba'il al-zawiya.. wa America tabda' bil tas'eed" [Gaddafi begs the tribes of Zawya.. And America begins to escalate] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 25, 2011.

[340] Ethan Chorin, *Exit Gaddafi: the Hidden History of the Libyan Revolution*, (London: Saki Books, 2012) 226.

[341] Mirza Khuweilidi, "Ali Jaber: Wajh Al Hakika" [Ali Jaber: The Face of Truth] *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, March 24, 2011.

Gaddafi's reference to media outlets as "stray dogs" was reflective of his aggressive attitude regarding any form of dissent. In the 1980s, his loyalists managed to carry out multiple assassinations of Libyan opposition figures in different parts of Europe. The groups that were referred to by Western media as "hit squads" were hailed by Gaddafi and depicted as "revolutionary committees" whose aim was to "liquidate stray dogs".[342] Gaddafi's regular use of such derogatory terms rendered them part and parcel of his speech all throughout his rule. Often, disparaging any form of political opposition was coupled with praising the use of force as a form of legitimate, even necessary, behavior. This time, however, the targets of Gaddafi's rhetoric were tens of thousands of protesters rather than small opposition groups, along with various media outlets fanning the flames of the uprising.

Gaddafi's other speech on February 22, in which he described the rebels as "mercenaries and rats", was subject to severe scrutiny by al-Jazeera's intellectuals. Not only did their counterframes involve his contradictory views as shown previously in Bishara's commentary, but also his weakening status as a ruler. In this context, the following analysis presented by Sleiman Dogha cast light on the implications of the Leader's speech in terms of setting (making a speech from his residential place Bab al-Azizia), imagery (technical adjustments of the footage and addition of sound effects), behavior (gestures and shivering hands), and choice of words (vowing to die a martyr):

> Sleiman Dogha: It was obvious how confused Gaddafi was; from his shivering hands to his gestures, even the location and filming. You might have noticed something extremely funny: they have added sound effects of cheering crowds. There were no crowds. This was recorded and edited hours before airing. Today, the Libyan regime no longer exists outside Bab al-Azizia where Gaddafi resides. [Gaddafi] didn't even [dare] leave his place of residence when addressing his people. We hope this is his last act. He might be imagining himself in Saddam Hussein's shoes as the latter approached the gallows, because he always has had this feeling. He didn't talk about what he'll be doing as much as he mourned himself. He said that he'll die a martyr and this clearly shows that the man has given all he can give. He asked the Libyan people to hit [the rebels] with an

[342] Lisa Anderson, *Qadhdhafi and his Opposition*, 225.

> iron fist. In the footage, we've seen youngsters hitting him [the screen showing him] with shoes in Benghazi rather than hitting anyone with an iron fist.[343]

In the extract above, Dogha aims to highlight Gaddafi's growing weakness despite his continued use of authoritative oratory. His analysis of the setting is meant to shed light on the Leader's isolation as he took shelter in his place of residence, which, in al-Jazeera's coverage, was depicted as his last resort. Real masses were missing from the picture and silence was replaced by poorly edited audio. The whole scene, according to Dogha, was a cover up for the regime's decay, for it "no longer exists outside Bab al-Azizia". The guest intellectual's enthusiasm was reflective of al-Jazeera's portrayal of the regime's stature: the network of institutional facts that the latter comprises of was vastly eroding on Libyan soil, and the Leader, or the principal institutional fact legitimizing all others, was practicing his authority in a bubble that was shrinking day by day. Dogha's emphasis on Gaddafi's deteriorating conditions as a means to belittle him conformed to al-Jazeera's general coverage. De-iconizing the Leader was the network's primary tool to delegitimize the Libyan regime as a whole, yet this was coupled with efforts to diagnose the fault prior to proposing remedies.

Diagnosing the fault: the people *want* a regime!

In 1973, Gaddafi initiated an "administrative revolution to bring the bureaucracy back to the people".[344] This was one of the five main pillars of his Third Universal Theory. He emphasized "individual sovereignty" and renounced democratic representation, judging it as an unfair form of domination by a political proxy, be it a party, group, or an individual.[345] Needless to say, the establishment of Popular Committees proved representation was eventually inevitable, even if it were created on a micro-level, as in the case of the thousands of committees dispersed all around Libya.

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[343] Dūğa, Sulaymān. "Ta'līq Sulaymān Dūğa 'alī ḫiṭāb al-zanqa zanqa" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARM34eYwVWE uploaded January 20, 2013, accessed October 2, 2011.

[344] Simons, *Libya: The Struggle for Survival*, 219.

[345] Ibid 240-244.

Nevertheless, in *al-Jamahiriyya*, all forms of state bureaucracies, from grassroots committees to superstructural ministries, demonstrated a form of chaotic representation and improvised decision-making processes. In Libya, citizens, including anti-Gaddafi protesters, were ironically in desperate need of a "regime with a system". Highlighting this issue was a form of diagnostic framing, with an aim to accent that the root problem of the Libyan crisis was Gaddafi's ideology and the resultant form of governance. Radical change, rather than reform, was accordingly promoted as an absolute need. The following extract draws on this argument:

> Azmi Bishara: The currently prevailing violence is a desperate one. It is the regime's attempt, better say the non-regime, to end things right from the beginning before they exacerbate, as it has seen how they have evolved in the neighboring countries. And this is perhaps because it perceives the issue as a matter of life or death and that its downfall would be inevitable [if things exacerbate]. This regime is a form of *power without a system* [stated in English]. This is a president who claims a monopoly on truth and bears a number of attributes pertaining to megalomania, and this has manifested itself in the deployment of a huge amount of violence because [Gaddafi] believes it is justified as his speech has shown.
>
> I think Gaddafi's main mechanism that has allowed him to rule this long is chaos. Chaos could be a cover-up for the worst kinds of tyranny. When you say I'm not a president, it seems modest of you but actually means that you are a president with absolute powers, because any definition of your power is a limitation. "I am not a president" means you refuse to be defined, because every word has a definition. If you are a president, this has a definition. If you are a king, this has a definition. Whereas if you say I refuse these definitions, it means you are everything. And he *is* actually everything. There is no structure. I think that even those who have a minimum bureaucratic culture in Libya such as government employees, including ministers, have no idea how they should be acting now. People should be chanting "the people *want* a regime" rather than "the people want to topple the regime".[346]

[346]Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-rābiʻ .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aE1FVLtdOw uploaded February 20, 2011, accessed October 12, 2014.

The Green Book was Gaddafi's guidebook to society. It presented a "utopian" yet simplistic form of governance, and displayed the Leader's anarchic approach concerning political affairs. Regarding the stateless society that Gaddafi advocates, Bishara accents in the abovementioned that one of the key reasons for revolt in Libya was the lack of organized institutional structures. This absence allowed Gaddafi to break free from all restrictions and possible forms of deterrence. This is because institutions allow for a broader circulation of viewpoints, even in authoritarian regimes. Thus decisions go through certain paths or channels that, in theory, could result in altering them or at least in systematizing them and familiarizing people with their patterns. Contrary to that, Gaddafi's regime, as Bishara contends, was a form of *power without a system*.

Bishara was commenting on Gaddafi's first speech in which he responded to calls for resignation by asserting that "he is not a president nor does he occupy any other position", but is rather "a leader of a revolution".[347] For decades, Gaddafi had refused to obtain an official status although, as the Leader, he functioned as an institutional fact holding absolute powers. This refusal revealed his rejection of all sorts of blame and responsibility, and, thus, his desire to sustain collective recognition through coercive means. Bishara's counterframes were therefore meant to emphasize that the Leader's abuse of power is a result of the complete absence of accountability and the lack of institutional means to limit his authority.

At the other end of the spectrum, Gaddafi condemned the Arab media coverage of Libya's events. He accused Arab networks of "tarnishing the image of Libyans and serving the devil".[348] This condemnation created an indirect discourse involving his frames and the counterframes presented on various Arab networks, of which al-Jazeera was the most prominent. The contribution of influential figures such as the head of the

[347] "Muktatafat min Khitab al-Kathafi" [Captions from Gaddafi's speech] *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 23, 2011.

[348] Ibid

Global Union for Islamic Scholars, Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, was thus an added value for al-Jazeera's counter narrative, as revealed by the following excerpt:

> Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi: The Libyan people are revolting against the vicious [regime], angered by the loss of their rights, and this day had to come. Every person can be patient, but patience has limits. The Libyan people have said their word, and the entire world has heard it, except for Gaddafi and the ones around him. He [thinks he] is all of Libya. He is the parliament, the constitution, the parties, and the philosopher, whereas the Libyans are nothing.[349]

Gaddafi's "philosophy", the Third Universal Theory, was meant to be an alternative to both, capitalism and communism. It was presented in his Green Book, which was effectively Libya's constitution that replaced representative parliaments with popular committees and banned parties and any other form of political organization and assembly. This was Gaddafi's way of distinguishing himself from all other regional and international figures in the 1970's bipolar world and to sell his theoretical baggage by promoting it as genuine.[350] With this amount of power concentration in his hands, Gaddafi was the ultimate ruling authority and was hence the target of the protesters' contempt. As al-Qaradawi does in the excerpt above, al-Jazeera's intellectuals were keen on pointing this out whenever Gaddafi made a speech, whereas he, on the other hand, not only denied charges of power exploitation, but negated his acquisition of power in the first place. In this context, responding to Gaddafi's claims was meant to proceed within an indirect yet peer-to-peer discourse. After all, the fact that Gaddafi took time in his speeches to respond to media allegations meant that he believed they were threatening to his authority. This discourse involved al-Jazeera's promotion of counterframes, whose aim was to further discredit Gaddafi's narrative, as shall be seen in the following.

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[349] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Kalimat al-Šayḫ al-Qaraḍāwī bidāyat ṯawra Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rw6ossHIHk8 uploaded February 20, 2011, accessed December 5, 2014.

[350] Arnold, *The Maverick State*, 17-20.

Countering the Narrative

On February 18, 2011, the Revolutionary Committees, through their official gazette *al-Zahf al-Akhdar* warned that the "power of the people, the Jamahiriyya, the revolution, and the Leader are red lines, and that trying to overcome them is playing with fire and suicide". It added that, thereafter, "neither the United States, nor the West, nor al-Jazeera shall be able to provide aid [to the rebels]".[351]

Al-Jazeera was implicitly referred to in the speeches of Gaddafi and Saif al-Islam, and overtly held responsible by the regime's media for inciting Libyan protests. This discourse involving al-Jazeera on the one hand, and the Libyan regime and its media on the other, comprised of frames and counterframes that each used to discredit the other's narrative and rationale. From his very first speech, Gaddafi accused Libyan protesters of owing allegiance to foreign powers or having a hidden Islamic agenda. They were also depicted as fools, mercenaries, and drug addicts.[352] As early as 23 February 2011, only 9 days after the outset of the protest movement, Libyan vice minister of foreign affairs alleged that al-Qaeda had already created an Islamic Emirate in the eastern city of Derna.[353] On al-Jazeera, this rhetoric was constantly discarded and depicted as a false representation of changing realities on the ground that the Libyan regime was unwilling to admit. Al-Jazeera's intellectuals thus argued that the allegations of Gaddafi and his loyalists had become failed attempts to change irreversible facts. The Leaders's investment in public relations companies was portrayed as a desperate attempt to convince the West of a faulty narrative that he was incapable of promoting domestically. The following sample-extracts present good examples:

> Sleiman Dogha: The Libyan state first sponsored fatwas that ban protests. Then it tried to sell a story that those youngsters have been manipulated.

[351] "Libya: suqūt 50 qatīlan wa-akthār min 200 jarīḥ fī ištibāqat damīya bayn al-amn wa-munāwi'in li-l-Qaḏḏāfī" [Libya: 50 Dead and 200 wounded in bloody clashes between the security and dissidents of Gaddafi] *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, February 19, 2011.

[352] "Muktatafat min Khitab al-Kathafi", *al-Sharq al-Awsat,* February 23, 2011.

[353] Chorin, *Exit Gaddafi*, 205.

> At first, there was no talk of foreign intervention. The manipulators were rather portrayed as criminals and former prisoners. This is an old rhetoric that no more convinces anyone.[354]
>
> Mahmoud Shammam: Our youngsters from the second and third generation, those who were born and have lived abroad due to the given circumstances in Libya, have managed to establish a network aiming to discredit the public relations campaign lead by an American and an English corporation. They are accusing those companies of supporting Gaddafi in his inhumane war on the Libyan people, and are sending messages to the Congress, the European Union, and European media outlets for that sake. We can now tell [the West] that this generation speaks with its heart and mind. It is addressing you using your own language. Don't say this is the generation of Bin Laden, as it has been educated in your universities and institutions, and [those youngsters] are launching their campaigns from Dubai, Doha, London, Geneva, and Austria, and will soon be launching a campaign from America.[355]

In a speech on March 6, Gaddafi warned the West of the emergence of "a jihad Islamic front on the Mediterranean", adding that Europe shall "see a return to the time of Barbarossa, the pirates, and the Ottomans imposing ransoms on boats".[356] As bizarre as his speculations may have seemed, their main aim was to highlight a possible future where terrorist networks would proliferate in vacuum and chaos and pose serious treats to the West, if his regime were to fall apart. Thus, Gaddafi was keen on depicting his alternative as a threat to regional and international peace and security, and since terrorism was a password to Western concerns, he heavily capitalized on the possibility of the expansion of al-Qaeda in Northern Africa and his ability to prohibit that from happening. Gaddafi's warnings regarding political chaos were similar to those of Mubarak, only further exaggerated. Hence, al-Jazaeera's counterframes were meant to stress that many Libyan youth activists have been educated in the West, hold Western principles, and call for the respect of human rights. The network's intellectuals

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[354] Dūğa, Sulaymān. "Ta'līq Sulaymān Dūğa 'alī ḫiṭāb al-zanqa zanqa" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARM34eYwVWE uploaded January 20, 2013, accessed October 2, 2011.

[355] Al-Shammām, Maḥmūd. "MAHMUD ALSHAMMAM ALJAZEERA 2011 03 09" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jb6ddvcybAc uploaded March 9, 2011, accessed October 14, 2014.

[356] Chorin, *Exit Gaddafi*, 205.

articulated imagined political possibilities in which they speculated a better future in terms of a stable, institutional, and constitutional democratic rule. They deployed diagnostic frames and counterframes as tools for uncovering the regime's weaknesses and discrepancies, and as introductory efforts for later attempts to mobilize masses. Thereafter, motivational frames were used to fuel the "revolution" and drive it forward towards a total deconstruction of the regime's institutional facts. Al-Jazeera's intellectuals engaged in this process very early on. Their most powerful attempts were those carries out by Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi's, who invested well in a potent religious speech, as shall be demonstrated in the following.

Fueling the "Revolution"

Perhaps the most powerful motivational frames that serve to fuel a conservative community facing an existential threat are of a religious nature. Following Gaddafi's announcements of his intent to "cleanse" the eastern part of the country, Libyan protesters started reaching out for alternative forms of action, whereas international players began considering the choice of intervention. In the midst of uncertainty and what could turn into a blood bath, maintaining the morale of Libyan dissidents became one of the main goals of al-Jazeera's intellectuals. In the same way he had previously addressed Egypt's protesters, Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi presented a religious account of the issue, with an aim to maximize the incentives of protesters and armed rebels (the latter term is used to denote militarized action) to hold their ground and challenge Gaddafi till the very end. With the frequent mention of possible international support for the dissidents, time became a crucial factor to both sides of the struggle. To Gaddafi, the faster the issue gets settled, the less chance things could get out of hand. Contrary to that, the rebels invested in the time element in the hope of upgrading their capabilities and receiving international aid or regional sponsorship. Motivational framing was vital for the rebels during this time interval, lest some of them submit to the regime's threatening oratory. For these reasons, al-Qaradawi's contributions were significantly important.

Consider the following two extracts from interviews with al-Qaradawi on al-Jazeera:

> Sheikh Yousssef al-Qaradawi: I ask the Libyan people to be patient. God told his believers; "O you who have believed, persevere and endure and remain stationed". No matter how severe the sacrifices are, they are not more precious than freedom. Freedom has a price that we have to pay if we encounter oppressive pharaohs. God says "if you are suffering, then surely they [too] are suffering as you are suffering, but you expect from Allah what they expect not". He who falls from us is a martyr for the cause of God and [shall be rewarded in] the highest heavens. "Think not of those who have been killed in the cause of God as dead. Nay, they are living, with their Lord, and they have provision". I call upon the Libyan people to persevere and to stand en bloc as God says "Allah loves those who fight in his cause in [solid] ranks, as though they were a [firm] structure cemented with molten lead". During the battle, they should be united. There should be no difference between one tribe and the other, between east and west. They should all stand against the oppressor.[357]

> Sheikh Yousssef al-Qaradawi: The same thing happened in Egypt and Tunisia. These oppressive regimes, as I previously stated, are blind, deaf, foolish, and rigid. God says "Indeed there is a reminder in this for him who has a heart or gives ear and is a witness". Gaddafi has seen with his eyes and heard with his ears about what happened to his friends and neighbors in the east and west, yet he did not learn his lesson… The people have asked for their rights and were faced with gunfire, tanks, and airplanes. And [Gaddafi] couldn't find a Libyan he could use in this scheme, so he referred to mercenaries to kill hundreds of Libyans in just a few days. I call upon the people to be patient and to hold their grounds. I offer them the same advice I have given Egyptians. No matter how much they sacrifice, they are eventually the winners. Gaddafi will soon be gone… I call upon the Libyan tribes to join the rebels. Anyone who hasn't joined the rebels yet should do that. This is an Islamic duty.[358]

The extracts above exhibit a form of intense religious motivational framing. Al-Qaradawi referred to the triumphant uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt to assure the rebels that things would head the same way if they maintain their unity. His usage of numerous

[357] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Al-Duktūr Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī muʻalliqan ʻalā mā yajrī fī Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bp7h644lTH4 uploaded February 21, 2011, accessed October 17, 2014.

[358] Al-Qaraḍāwī, Dr. Yūsuf. "Kalimat al-Šayḫ al-Qaraḍāwī bidāyat ṯawra Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rw6ossHIHk8 uploaded February 20, 2011, accessed December 5, 2014.

Quranic verses was meant to motivate them as well as to reduce the extent of compliance with Gaddafi's orders amongst his loyalists by encouraging defections within the regime's inner circles. Al-Qaradawi highlighted the gains of the struggle (freedom) and glorified the possible price (heaven). He reminded the rebels of their ability to inflict damage upon their opponents, deploying religious figures of speech for that purpose, while urging those who haven't joined protesters to shift sides. If they refrain from doing so, he explained, they would be breaching their Islamic duty.

Al-Qaradawi's speeches were thus deployed to fuel the rebels with religious incentives as they engaged in bloody battles on various fronts with Gaddafi's heavily armed brigades. The cleric asserted that the new Libya to emerge from this bloodshed was worthy of sacrifice. Deconstructing the existing authoritarian rule required persistence and will, and for collective intentionality to be restored, it had to be enforced after decades of regime maintenance through coercive means. Al-Qaradawi stressed that, in order to affirm the legitimacy of their demands, the rebels had to strive for the protection of their social movement. Delegitimizing Libya's oligarchy required commitment to the uprising's aims within severe circumstances, and the regime's institutional facts had to be dismantled by engaging in a full-fledged war.

In this context, the term mercenaries was often used by al-Jazeera's intellectuals (as shown in the excerpt above) as well as throughout the channel's coverage in general to further delegitimize Gaddafi's regime. Depicting Gaddafi loyalists as such was meant to stress the claim that the regime's institutional facts do not rely on local collective recognition but rather on the support of foreign intruders who fight to maintain the ruling elite's interests in return for financial gains. Not only was this rationale part of media rhetoric, but NTC members also deployed it in their communication with the outside world. In this regard, Deputy Head of the NTC Abdel Hafiz Ghoka banked on these allegations, as he later urged the UN and the "countries that support the revolution to launch airstrikes against sites and positions occupied by mercenaries, which have

been used against civilians and against the Libyan people".[359]

Proponents of the Libyan uprising, including al-Jazeera's intellectuals, often used the terms *Libyan people* and *mercenaries* in the course of constructing a narrative that hails one side of the conflict while demonizing the other. Accordingly, the term Libyan people was deployed to denote collective recognition and to emphasize the source of legitimacy, whereas the term mercenaries was meant to deny Gaddafi's allegations regarding his acquisition of popular support amongst Libyans.

Al-Jazeera's intellectuals contributed in various ways to the transmission of motivational messages. Some, as the following excerpt reveals, deployed a zealous tone to lift confidence and promote optimism by stressing their absolute faith in Libya's future prospects. This form of motivation incorporated counterframes that refute the regime's vision regarding an unknown and insecure alternative in the case of its downfall. Its counterframes were also meant to deny claims that the rebels were seeking foreign intervention or would even accept it. Few days following this commentary, however, opposition figures did call for international aid, as Gaddafi launched a counter attack and began recapturing the cities he had previously lost, thus putting the Libyan uprising in jeopardy.

> Mahmoud Shammam: The cities are falling one after the other. By God this country shall be a safe one. Don't believe those who say it will transform into warring emirates. This will not happen. There will be some irregularities, but those will not exceed the normal range. I want to emphasize that no Libyan has called for international intervention. The Libyan people rather insisted on not having foreign troops on their soil, even though few might have called for that in response to the [regime's] violence.[360]

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[359] Andrei Netto, *Bringing Down Gaddafi: On the Ground with the Libyan Rebels*, trans. Micheal Mardsen (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 136.

[360] Al-Shammām, Maḥmūd. "Kalima A. Maḥmūd Shammām 'an al-majlis al-intiqālī 2011/03/05" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUFKfuOUhIY uploaded March 6, 2011, accessed November 10, 2014.

Motivational frames were employed to serve a full-fledged "revolution" whose aim was to create a new social order. They paved the way for imagining a country with alternative political possibilities. Re-inventing Libya's institutional facts was, as previously mentioned, the ultimate phase to follow al-Jazeera's framing processes, and this succession of phases allowed for the materialization of certain revolutionary visions promoted by the Qatari network. As al-Jazeera disseminated its revolutionary rhetoric and narrative regarding Libya's events, new institutional facts were actually emerging in eastern Libya. In parallel, discussing future prospects became part of the intellectuals' output on al-Jazeera, as Gaddafi's measures to restore legitimacy were failing on the local and international levels alike. However, the future that these discussions entailed went further than imagining a new political order. Issues of identity soon surfaced in the discourse and the reconstruction of a new Libya, even hypothetically, introduced intricate questions regarding the very basic constituents of the Libyan state and society.

Disputes over identity: Defining future Libya

How far should deconstruction go in order to rebuild a legitimate social order bearing collective intentionality? Would it be reasonable to presume that the Libyan society is *Arab* or *Islamic* prior to discussing future possibilities, or should all forms of identity be reinterpreted in light of the vast deconstruction of the state's institutional facts? To what extent do issues of identity facilitate or hinder the creation of a newly modeled state?

The aforementioned were sample questions and issues that were raised in the course of discussing post Gaddafi Libya. They were triggered by concerns on the costs of a power vacuum following the disintegration of the country's social order and by the fact that tribal affiliations were gradually replacing loyalty to the state. The collapse of Libya's institutional facts drove many Libyans to search for alternative forms of belonging that either had dominated past eras or presently reduce identity to pre-state constituencies. The rebels' reference to Libya's flag of independence (or of the monarchy) provides a striking example in this regard.

Following its independence in 1951, the legitimacy that Libya's king Idris the First enjoyed was neither established on Libyan patriotism nor on Arab nationalism but rather on Sanusiyya, an Islamic Sufi order that emerged in the mid 19th century.[361] In the 1950s and 1960s, many young Libyans were attracted by Gamal Abdel Nasser's advocacy of Arab nationalism, and Gaddafi was one of them. Gaddafi's identity politics, however, constantly changed throughout his rule that initiated in 1969, one year before Nasser's death. His Green Book offered the ideological tools for this change as it "stove to blend nationalism, Pan Arabism, Africanism, and Islamism to confront anti-imperialism and purportedly protect African nations from what he called Western usurpation and exploitation".[362] This broad understanding of Libya's identity allowed Gaddafi to remold it and introduce it differently in accordance with changes and developments in regional and international contexts (Egypt's shift in foreign policy during Sadat's rule in the 1970s, Western sanctions on Libya especially in the 1980s, the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Oslo Accords in 1993, "War on Terror" followed by the war on Iraq in 2003…). Hence, Gaddafi accented Pan Africanism and called for the creation of a "United States of Africa" when he felt that Arab Nationalism was on the decline and Pan Arab politics were no more profitable, and as he got frustrated from the continuous fragmentation of the Arab political system, especially following the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel in 1978 and the Oslo Accords between Israel and the PLO a decade and a half later. In this context, for example, he emphasized in a 2007 interview on al-Jazeera that Libya "is an African country" and wished that Arabs "would stay away, for they did not fight with us against Italians, nor against Americans, nor did they lift the sanctions and siege from us. On the contrary, they gloated at us, and benefited from our hardship".[363]

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[361] Lisa Anderson, "Religion and State in Libya: the Politics of Identity", 68.

[362] Moha Ennaji (ed.), Multiculturalism and Democracy in North Africa: Aftermath of the Arab Spring (Routledge: New York, 2013), 137.

[363] "Gaddafi as orator: A life in quotes". Al-Jazeera. October 20, 2011. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/09/20119493450743624.html

In pursuit of political representation in these extra-national frameworks, Gaddafi claimed himself the King of Kings of Africa, the Dean of Arab rulers, and the Imam of Muslims. [364] During the uprising, some of al-Jazeera's intellectuals echoed concerns that the Leader's deployment of such forms of identification in the hope of expanding his regional influence might create a backlash amongst his dissidents regarding Libya's identity. In the following two excerpts, for example, Bishara warns of the damages of emphasizing tribal affiliations and of a possible resentment of Arab and Islamic discourse in future Libya.

> Azmi Bishara: This is the first time where the Libyans get the chance to organize themselves in modern civil societies. I am interested in following up with their means of organization and of developing a political discourse. [Gaddafi] did not leave a civil society, nor did he leave political parties, institutions, or unions. There is a danger that people might refer to their local communities to protect themselves, and that organization would be made on a local level due to the absence of links and communication between cities. The political discourse should be more than a mere reaction to [Gaddafi's] ideology. [Gaddafi] has sometimes used Islam and Arabism at other times. There is a risk that people would react against Islam, Arabism, and Africa. This discourse has been used to exploit them. The Libyans must hold on to their Arab Islamic identity and must be part of Africa, for this is how they could develop a national project.[365]
>
> (Commenting on Gaddafi's speech in which he warned of the threat posed by al-Qaeda)
>
> Azmi Bishara: Emphasizing the tribal nature of Libya is annoying. The guarantees lies in building national institutions; a national army and institutions that the Arab World recognizes. This would lead to opening borders with Egypt and Tunisia and engaging the Arab World. It is okay

[364] Gaddafi used those terms to describe himself in an Arab Summit in March 30, 2009, adding: "my international status does not allow me to descend to a lower level". His statement was used in the course of "reconciling" with Saudi King Abdullah after years of boycott and tensions. See "I'm the King of Kings: Gaddafi storms out of Arab summit and labels Saudi king 'a British product'", *Daily Mail*, accessed May 1, 2016. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1165858/Im-king-kings-Gaddafi-storms-Arab-summit-labels-Saudi-king-British-product.html

[365] Bišāra, Dr. 'Azmī. "Ṭawrat al-ša'b fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-rābi' 'ašr .. Dr. 'Azmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yI_Rdd0migw uploaded March 2, 2011, accessed October 10, 2014.

> to use the tribal element as a tool in the revolution. But we must realize that this tool cannot be a base for changing the regime. The tool should be a national one, based on citizenship, institutions, equality before the law, and the Arab and Islamic identity, and not on the same tools that Gaddafi used.[366]

With the lack of modern state institutions, it was only normal for tribal affiliations to maintain their strength and to form a second layer of identity under the thin national facet that defined Gaddafi's era. Albeit he worked on moderating these affiliations on the national level by establishing administrative divisions that transcend tribal segmentation, Gaddafi enhanced the links joining his own tribe to those that were closely associated with it due to political, historical, or geographic factors.[367] In his armed forces, all major tribes were represented, yet, as BBC's Mohammad Hussein contends, "fostering rivalries among the various tribes in the army through selective patronage has not only strengthened his control over the military, but has also worked to draw attention away from Col. Gaddafi and his regime".[368] Accordingly, Bishara's criticism of stressing tribal affiliations in revolutionary rhetoric is based on the grounds that tribalism had formerly been Gaddafi's means to divide and rule before later being deployed by his loyalists to accent the dangers of his regime's downfall. This frame dispute that Bishara engages in with protagonists of the uprising aims to highlight the importance of creating alternative institutional facts following the dissolution of Gaddafi's stateless realm of power. In this context, Arab and Islamic identities serve as adhesive elements in the process of state building. Emphasizing them rather than frequently referring to tribal affiliations serves in reaffirming Libya's national identity and avoiding raising the concerns of regional players that share the country's transnational forms of identification (such as neighboring Tunisia and Egypt). Bishara

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[366] Bišāra, Dr. 'Azmī. "Ṯawrat al-ša'b fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-ṯāmin .. Dr. 'Azmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GytjEXQNr-I uploaded March 2, 2011, accessed October 10, 2014.

[367] Chorin, *Exit Gaddafi*, 177.

[368] Hussein, "Libya crisis", 21 February 2011.

argues that the aforementioned, in addition to the creation of proper state institutions, are necessary tools to dispose of Gaddafi's legacy and replace it with an alternative political order. The replacement of Gaddafi's regime, however, was not only based on this intricate process of framing. In parallel to this discourse, an international consensus regarding the need to militarily intervene was building. Henceforth, the media's leverage, including al-Jazeera's, began receding, and NATO's hard power became the decisive factor in Libya's political transformation.

From al-Jazeera to NATO

Within just few weeks following the outset of protests, al-Jazeera managed to create a well-established network in the Eastern part of Libya, with satellite transmitters dispersed in Tubrok, Benghazi, Ras Lanuf, and Brega. The channel made use of local technicians to operate SNGs[369] and citizen journalists to provide it with daily footage. Ali Hashem, its correspondent to Benghazi in March and April 2011, was put in touch with local tribesmen and militant rebels by the network's administration in Doha prior to his deployment in the country. This made the "team" of news providers he was part of or collaborated with extend beyond the channel's actual staff, as it comprised of a wide circle of contributors to the network's broadcast output.[370]

The connection that al-Jazeera was able to establish with local activists, militants, and opposition figures, many of whom had defected from the regime, allowed it to communicate its message to its audience (including Libyan spectators) more powerfully, as it amplified the opposition's demands and reinforced them with narrative construction and motivational frames. The interactive character of the channel's coverage enhanced its persuasive leverage and soft power capabilities. Moreover, the role that its intellectuals played in proposing alternative political structures and imagining different

[369] SNG, abbreviation for Satellite News Gathering, is a term usually used to denote mobile communications equipment used for satellite transmission.

[370] Interview with Ali Hashem, former al-Jazeera reporter and correspondent to Benghazi during the uprising. November 2014.

possibilities on the one hand, and in bonding with the actual creators of these structures and possibilities on the other, furthered the channel's role as an institutional organic intellectual.

Al-Jazeera's intellectual output contributed to crystallizing a vision of what ought to be deconstructed in Libya and what ought to replace it. In the course of doing so, it threatened the security of the regime's top figures as well as the stability of its institutional facts. The militarization of the uprising, however, reduced the impact of the intellectual output including the framing processes it entailed, and augmented the role of hard power in shaping events. Thereafter, the tone of al-Jazeera's intellectuals expressed gradual submission to the changing conditions and realities. What was unacceptable (foreign intervention) became necessary under the pretext that Gaddafi was using brute force to crack down on protesters. Nevertheless, and although some commentaries lamented the militarization of the conflict and the uprising's growing contingency on foreign interference, al-Jazeera's intellectuals continued to accent the need for a complete deconstruction of the Libyan regime. The following excerpts reflect concerns and shifting stances, yet flow within the same grand strategy of countering the regime until its downfall.

> Azmi Bishara: We hope [the uprising] does not turn into a civil war. This is still a popular revolution but has mutated into an armed one because the man ruling Libya wished to turn it into one. He did not have the responsibility of Zine el-Abidine Bin Ali who was much more rational, nor did he have Egypt's institutions that were able to pressure the president and push him [to resign].[371]

> Sheikh Ali Sallabi: The Libyans refuse [foreign] military intervention and are capable of overthrowing this dictatorial regime. Every Libyan who calls for military intervention shall be considered a traitor and is neither accepted by the rebels nor by the Libyan people.[372]

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[371] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-tāsiʻ ʻašr .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSt3JBPxdSA uploaded March 7, 2011, accessed November 3, 2014.

[372] Al-Ṣallābī, al-Šayḫ ʻAlī. "Al-Šayḫ ʻAlī al-Ṣalābī yarfuḍ al-tadaḫḫul al-ajnabī al-ʻaskarī fī Lībīyā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0g7iSucPEs uploaded February 26, 2011, accessed November 12, 2014.

> Sheikh Youssef Al-Qaradawi: We wish the Leader – this is how he was keen on being addressed - had listened. Had he felt with his people, he wouldn't have forced our Umma to refer to the United Nations to make him stop killing his people.
>
> (Commenting on Gaddafi's depiction of the war as a Crusade):
>
> Is he the protector of Islam? Threatening his people with death; how is this Islamic? The Libyan people have urged them [the international community] to intervene. Even on the very last night, and while the Security Council was holding its consultations, he told them I shall be coming to invade you tonight. This is out of necessity. We did not ask the West for help. We asked an international organization; the United Nations and the Security Council.[373]

In the excerpts above, Bishara highlights the main aspect that differentiates the case of Libya from that of Egypt. In the latter, as previously explained, state institutions (mainly the army) played a major role in securing a relatively smooth transition of power. The lack of institutions in Libya, on the other hand, prevented the possibility of replicating the Egyptian scenario. Bishara was keen, however, on clearly blaming the regime for the uprising's mutation into a civil war, alleging that it deliberately pushed the discourse in that direction. Similarly, al-Qaradawi held Libyan authorities responsible for inviting foreign intervention by cornering the rebels and protesters and forcing them to choose between death and destruction on the one hand, and reliance on foreign aid on the other. Al-Qaradawi explains that the rebels' reference to foreign actors was their only way for salvation. Yet he adds that aid and assistance was requested from the United Nations, as an international organization, rather than Western state actors per se. This was meant to counterframe Gaddafi's narrative that, in the course of drawing on Islamic sentiments, depicted foreign intervention as a form of Crusade.

Legitimizing foreign intervention was a delicate issue in the Arab World where the public sphere, as previously explained in the literature review, was partially

[373] Al-Qaraḍāwī, al-Šayḫ Yūsuf. "Ra'ī al-Šayḫ al-Qaraḍāwī bi-l-ḫaṭr al-jawī + taṣrīḥ 'Umar wa Mūsā" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSfS_WN_4iU uploaded March 21, 2011, accessed December 2, 2014.

characterized by its anti-Western sentiments and thus defined as a counterpublic. What made the issue even more sensitive was the insistence of NTC figures and al-Jazeera intellectuals on rejecting foreign support. In an excerpt displayed earlier, Shammam said "no Libyan has called for international intervention", adding that "the Libyan people rather insisted on not having foreign troops on their soil, even though few might have called for that in response to the regime's violence". In the abovementioned, al-Sallabi went as far as depicting those who call for intervention as "traitors" that the Libyan people repudiate. The frequent use of the term Libyan people (as both excerpts show) was meant to frame such calls as missing the element of collective intentionality and therefore as lacking legitimacy. This explains why, in his commentary, al-Qaradawi deployed the term Umma in the course of legitimizing appeals for international aid. Al-Qaradawi contends that the Umma, as a collective entity, was "forced" to refer to the Security Council to stop Gaddafi from killing his people. Accordingly, not only were these calls for support meant to address the United Nations (rather than specific foreign actors with private agendas), but were also endorsed by the vast majority of Muslims, as al-Qaradawi's counterframes suggest.

In parallel to this battle of legitimacy, an intense PR campaign was organized to polish the image of Gaddafi's regime and a psychological war was being fought between the regime and its antagonists prior to the declaration of Security Council resolution 1973 that allows foreign intervention. In response to Saif al-Islam's statement in which he said "it'll be too late by the time the Security Council resolution is issued" and that the regime's "military operations will end within 48 hours", Bishara emphasizes that the regime is playing its last remaining cards to tilt the balance of public opinion and bribe international players.

> Azmi Bishara: This is primarily a psychological war. Telecommunications are down and the [anti-Gaddafi] channels' broadcasts are often disrupted. The Libyan Television, on the other hand, seems to be reaching everyone in Libya. Secondly, there is a crew of political and military advisers and public relations experts [working in support of the Libyan regime]. There are attempts to win the international public opinion. [Saif al-Islam's underlying message is the following]:

> The military balance is tilting in our favor. So those who need oil contracts should redo their calculations. Thirdly, let's assume he is right. Does occupying his cities serve his narrative? He is now saying my people are resisting my rule and I am obliged to invade my cities with tanks.[374]

On the following day (one day prior to the Security Council's discussions), Bishara's commentaries seemed to be gradually changing into ones bearing analysis rather than promoting various kinds of frames (especially motivational ones) as the first excerpt below shows. This was also the case on the day the resolution was issued (see second excerpt below). Interestingly, Bishara hoped that the resolution itself would have a motivational effect on protesters in cities that had not witnessed mass protests yet. The fact that the decision might force Gaddafi's brigades to withdraw from cities was thought to have a positive impact on Libyans that were still reluctant to join the uprising. The resolution's admission of a no-fly zone and possible airstrikes against Gaddafi's forces provided Libyan dissidents with an incentive to expand their protests. Thus, its introduction of brute force through foreign intervention offered a replacement to the various forms of motivational frames (religious and otherwise) that were communicated via the media.

> Azmi Bishara: Whether there are massacres or not, these people no more accept this regime. They no more accept [Gaddafi's] weird way of governance, from the absence of institutions to subjecting people to his thoughts, philosophy, style, alliances, and whims. [The Security Council] will take a strong decision tonight. It will go further than imposing a no-fly zone. The current discussion at the Security Council shows that Ban Ki-moon's demand for an immediate cease-fire appeases the Russian position and aims to integrate it with the Arab-British proposed resolution.[375]

> Azmi Bishara: I hope this will not lead to Western intervention, in the sense that the Security Council resolution would have a deterring effect

[374] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-28 .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztCsWNdPlgo uploaded March 16, 2011, accessed November 13, 2014.

[375] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-29 .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtDwQdI1bcg uploaded March 17, 2011, accessed November 10, 2014.

> and that this would motivate cities that have not been liberated yet to protest again. The best case scenario would be that this resolution would force [Gaddafi's] battalions to leave the cities and that it would allow the people to demonstrate again in the same way they have done at the beginning of the uprising.[376]

Bishara's depiction of a "best case scenario" where Libyans would protest as they previously had reveals the extent of change that the discourse had undergone and the impact of this change on al-Jazeera's output. The uprising's mutation into an armed conflict and the introduction of foreign elements to the struggle have reduced the impact of soft power and put state actors that possess hard power capabilities in control. Bishara could not but "hope" that the Security Council resolution would allow the Libyans to recreate the first phase of the uprising or reenact its first scene. The term "hope" was radically different from the motivational vocabulary formerly used by Bishara to incite protests or propose strategies for Libya's social movement. It was a form of tacit confession that media leverage had been overtaken by brute force.

Al-Jazeera's deployment of soft power was introductory to the use of hard power on local and international scales. When asked by the writer of this thesis about his account of the uprising's evolution, Shammam argued that Gaddafi and his antagonists were both responsible for its militarization in various degrees: whilst the regime's use of brute force constituted a key factor for pushing in this direction, Islamist factions, especially the Islamic Fighting Group, saw in this militarization a chance to expand and to forcefully dominate the scene thereafter. In this regard, echoing Jibril's accusations stated earlier, Shammam added that Qatar and al-Jazeera prioritized supporting Islamists on the expense of other Libyan dissidents. He also contended that the network generally encouraged local and foreign military action, citing al-Qaradawi's approval of NATO's intervention after the declaration of Security Council Resolution 1973 to support his

[376] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-ṯalāṯūn .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9edMZ1FBhII uploaded March 18, 2011, accessed November 23, 2014.

claim.[377]

Throughout the first 33 days of the Libyan uprising, al-Jazeera and its intellectuals engaged in an intricate process of deconstructing and constructing meaning and reality. The channel made use of the vast network it established with protesters and rebels to magnify the scene and amplify the opposition's narrative. Its Libyan intellectuals were an added value to its output, as they possessed a dual role in terms of promoting frames on the one hand, and of strengthening the channel's ties and interplay with Libyan activists on the other. Yet the outlet's impact soon receded, as it paved the way – along with other media networks - for foreign military intervention following the declaration of Security Council Resolution 1973. The resolution was approved by 10 member states, whereas 5 states abstained including permanent members Russia and China. It was obvious that the countdown of Gaddafi's regime had begun, and that the upper hand had become that of the anti-Gaddafi military coalition headed by NATO, and that few Arab countries, including Qatar, took part of. Thereafter, the contributions of al-Jazeera's intellectuals were more descriptive and analytical than motivational, as they had initially been.

Conclusion

In one of his interviews, Bishara criticized the popular Arab rush for quick outcomes, arguing that "one must not deal with current events according to the laws of live broadcast, and thus expect to get 10 news stories per day. One should rather understand that, on a historical scale, the regime is disintegrating very quickly".[378]

Gaddafi's regime disintegrated in Libya as its institutional facts lost collective recognition and its ability to enforce this recognition. Al-Jazeera and its regular guest-intellectuals played a role in accelerating this process and maximizing its effects, and

[377] Interview with Libyan politician and former al-Jazeera guest Mahmoud Shammam. September 2015.

[378] Bišāra, Dr. ʻAzmī. "Ṯawrat al-šaʻb fī Lībīyā .. al-yawm al-ʻāšir .. Dr. ʻAzmī Bišāra - 1" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X6YtGvTihas uploaded February 26, 2011, accessed October 10, 2014.

since the time element was crucial in the case of Libya as previously explained, the network's impact was of substantial importance.

As it had formerly done in the case of Egypt, al-Jazeera utilized intellectuals with potent oratory to promote revolutionary frames and anti-regime narratives. However, what distinguished the case of Libya were elements pertaining to the regime's institutional facts that were founded on a dogmatic ideology and revolved around Gaddafi's idiosyncrasies rather than state structures. This made change a harder task to achieve and necessitated a full-fledged revolution to dismantle the existing social order. The result was a prolonged conflict that mutated from peaceful protestation to a militarized conflict and foreign intervention.

The distinct features of Gaddafi's regime impelled a different approach by al-Jazeera as well. The outlet made use of Libyan intellectuals that worked on two parallel lines. The first pertained to mediatized forms of framing and deconstruction of meaning, and the second related to planning the establishment of new institutional facts over the rubble of old ones. The National Transitional Council was the main banner that the outlet collaborated with to further its promotional campaign for alternative political possibilities. This campaign took place along with its intellectuals' active participation in the foundation and operationalization of the council that eventually channeled arms and funds to rebels on the ground, allowing them to set the building blocks of a new social order, and to instill a different notion of legitimacy.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The literature on media and politics has not examined the role of intellectuals as articulators and transmitters of information via the media in the course of reflecting on political events. Rarely has an interdisciplinary association been made between intellectual activity and the media's representational power in political contexts. The significance of this missing link relates to the enhanced ability of intellectuals to make sense of events and disseminate their narrative of them in the availability of new telecommunication technologies. In this regard, this thesis aims to contribute to bridging the gap between conventional accounts of intellectual output and common references to televised media effect as a mere outcome of image production. Thus, it emphasizes the potency of human agency in a postmodern medium of representation, and reinterprets the role of both, the media and intellectuals, in light of their ability to collaboratively engage with social dynamics aiming to reestablish social realities.

The thesis thus addresses the absent intellectual facet in the politics-media interplay and goes beyond traditional accounts of its outcomes. As it examines al-Jazeera's output in revolutionary contexts, it analyzes the role of its articulate intellectuals in constructing collective action frames in the cases of Egypt and Libya. In the course of dissecting al-Jazeera's various forms of engagement with the political discourse, the thesis investigates the outlet's phenomenal emergence as an institutional organic intellectual during the Arab uprisings. This intellectual element is examined in the course of explaining the network's role in deconstructing social facts and promoting alternative political possibilities. It is understood to be integrally constitutive of this processual phenomenon of meaning construction and social reality deconstruction.

Theoretical and Empirical Contributions

Al-Jazeera's intellectual output has organically connected the outlet to the social movements actively shaping events on the ground, and has thus enhanced its leverage in terms of impacting the discourse in question. This triangular relationship between the outlet mediating texts and images, an intellectual ingredient provided by regular commentators, and popular dynamics, constitutes the base of our resultant theoretical contributions. Hence, the thesis inferences primarily relate to its elucidation of this intricate process comprising of the aforementioned interplaying elements. Our investigation of this process has resulted in the generation of two main theoretical contributions. The first suggests the propensity of a powerful media outlet to perform the function of an institutional organic intellectual in the presence of human agency (its individual guest intellectuals capitalizing on its news output). And the second pertains to the ability of intellectual output disseminated through new media technologies to contribute to the deconstruction of social realities in revolutionary contexts, and to even introduce the creation of alternative social facts.

The concept of an institutional organic intellectual constitutes an addition to the literature on intellectuals and media alike. As earlier explained, intellectuals have generally been classified in three different categories. The taxonomy of class-bound intellectuals was the one deployed in the course of analyzing al-Jazeera's engagements with the discourse in Egypt and Libya. In this category, the notion of Gramsci's *organic intellectual* has been formerly redefined (and often renamed) to fit a wide selection of cases. Of those were ones particularly relevant to social movements rather than social classes. Yet this interpretation of the intellectual's organic role did not surpass the intellectual's individual contribution to social and political discourse. Our understanding of this organic role is one involving the deployment of new media technologies to amplify the processes of meaning construction through intellectual articulations in the service of social movements calling for political change. This incorporation of media has resulted in the emergence of an institutional intellectual with high-tech capabilities and an ability to connect with wide social strata. Al-Jazeera's engagement with the uprisings

was active and guided by strategies that were continuously molded and articulated through on-air commentaries. The contentious nature of its engagements that took the form of various framing processes was meant to counter hegemonic power structures in both, Egypt and Libya. Al-Jazeera, as an institutional organic intellectual, was thus operating as a counter hegemonic force opposing despotic regimes along with congruent circles of ruling elites and loyalists that were linked to the governing class through clientalistic or ideological connections (the former in the case of Egypt and the latter in that of Libya).

The second theoretical contribution explaining the ability to restructure social realities through intellectual articulations serves as an addition to the literature on media on the one hand, and that on framing and social movements on the other. Regarding the literature on media, and as earlier explained, the impact of media on collective cognition has primarily been addressed with reference to the representational power of mediated images and texts that often constitute modified versions of reality. The media's tendency to redesign the sequence of events or rearrange their constellation, in addition to their propensity to amplify certain angles of a discourse and discard others, have both been thought to result in the generation of a hyper form of reality that eventually effaces distinctions between the real world and the constructed one. Our thesis offers something that vastly differs from this account of hyperreality construction, as it suggests that the meaning generated through intellectual articulations could constitute the basic building block of language contingent social realities. This form of social reality construction through linguistic practices gains potency when using a powerful media platform like al-Jazeera, and while operating in a vibrant context such as that of the Arab uprisings. As for the contribution to the literature on framing, this thesis presents two empirical illustrations of how collective action frames were constructed in the context of a revolutionized public sphere. By presenting thorough analysis of al-Jazeera's framing process in two distinct settings with different intervening variables, this research serves in enriching the literature on the subject with an empirical contribution on the Arab World during one of its most critical junctures in modern times. Critics of the framing

perspective have specifically referred to the scarcity of empirical research as opposed to the abundancy of conceptual accounts as formerly discussed. This adds to the significance of our contribution, as it serves in complimenting the existing body of literature with further illustrations.

Limitations of the Contribution

Despite establishing this connection between representation and social reality construction through intellectual participation, the thesis does not prove the presence of a tangible link between linguistic articulations on the one hand, and the actual establishment of institutional facts on the other. This is its first major limitation. Al-Jazeera has contributed to change, not only through its promotional discourse, but by functioning as an active institutional entity that offered a space for interaction between individuals sharing similar goals (intellectuals and opposition figures on the one hand, and intellectuals and social movement activists on the other). It has also contributed to the deconstruction of regime social facts in Egypt and state social facts in Libya, as it participated in the delegitimation of both through intense framing processes. These framing processes have played a role in disarming the institutional facts in question of the element of collective recognition and in provoking protesting masses to pursue fundamental change rather than mild reform. Not only has the network's impact on the discourse been noticed on the ground (as empirical evidence has precisely shown in Cairo's Tahrir Square and Libya's Benghazi) but also in the retaliatory reactions of the regimes themselves in both countries. Al-Jazeera has also facilitated the creation of alternative political realities in the case of Libya due to its active anti-regime participation in the discourse and the dual role that its Libyan guest intellectuals have played regarding the promotion of alternatives and the actual establishment of them (their membership in Libya's NTC or connections with militant rebels, the space of interaction between Libyan dissidents and Qatari authorities that the network offered…). Notwithstanding, proving a quantifiable and direct causal relationship between the intellectual processes of engagement – as ideational constructs – on the one hand, and the material deconstruction and construction of social facts on the other, is beyond the

aims and possible means of this study. Thus, this thesis does not claim (and cannot either) that a) it can nullify the effects of all intervening variables in the course of assessing al-Jazeera's effect nor that b) it can quantify the causal relationship between ideational constructs and social realities. It rather aims to explain *how* al-Jazeera contributed to the processes of deconstructing social realities as opposed to illustrating *to what extent* it has done so. The wealth of empirical evidence provided in this thesis has indeed shown that al-Jazeera has had a substantial impact in this regard, yet does not allow one to *measure* this impact.

Another major limitation of this thesis is that it refrains from expounding the relationship between al-Jazeera and its sponsoring state, Qatar, and does not aim to provide an explanation of the network's editorial line. Arab regimes facing dissent often blamed al-Jazeera for inciting protestations against them and accused the network of acting as a tool for foreign intervention. On various occasions, they coupled these allegations with charging Qatar, al-Jazeera's partisan state, of meddling with their domestic affairs in the hope to enhance its regional leverage. A former senior journalist in the channel asserts that al-Jazeera's general editorial policies were indeed designed by the head of its board of directors who was also a member of the Qatari ruling family, whereas high-ranking managerial employees and senior bulletin producers worked on translating these guidelines through the outlet's coverage on a day to day basis.[379] This partisan relationship has been discussed in several contributions during times of peace as shown in our literature review. Yet none of these contributions has so far illuminated the forms of instrumental deployment of this relationship in the context of a vibrant regional power discourse, as in the case of the Arab uprisings. Our thesis, although providing empirical data and presenting theoretical implications that could be readapted and reapplied in later studies, neither addresses the topic of Qatari foreign policy nor aims to situate al-Jazeera's role in this regard. It is true that the idea of organicity that this thesis deploys could serve in highlighting the forms of Qatar's deployment of al-Jazeera, yet

[379] Interview with Osama Radi, former senior bulletin producer in al-Jazeera.

this does not fall within the scope of our study and any research in this regard is left for possible contributions in the future.

Comparisons and deductions

It is worth noting, as a start, that the discourse between regime antagonists and protagonists regarding the social movements calling for change in both, Egypt and Libya, was mainly expressed by the regimes' officials on the one hand, and rival media networks (primarily al-Jazeera) on the other. This was because official media outlets in both countries were weaker than engaging in this confrontational battle of credibility alone, for apart from the difference in capabilities, their output was rather a form of maladroit propaganda. Thus, Mubarak and Gaddafi as well as other regime figures often took part in this discourse in person, whereas al-Jazeera's intellectuals concentrated their remarks on the regimes and their heads rather than merely analyzing events in what seemed at times to be a pear-to-pear discourse. Accordingly, the network's intellectual engagement with the uprisings involved a) a diagnosis of the situation in hand whereby its intellectuals blamed the regimes as a whole for the states' deteriorating conditions; b) a prognosis of proposed strategies to rectify the situation and this generally involved ousting the heads of regimes and deconstructing institutions associated with them; and c) motivational vocabulary to incite mass mobilization with the aim of achieving these intended goals. In the following, we shall outline a brief comparison between both regimes' reactions to threat as this research has shown, before explaining how this difference in reaction has resulted in a variant engagement by al-Jazeera.

As explained previously, the regimes in Egypt and Libya differed in various aspects. In Egypt, the regime was a hierarchical structure of power relations that governed well-established state institutions. It was regulated by a constitution that, although tailored to concentrate political power in the hands of the President, was made up of clear provisions that defined and delineated the authority practiced by executive, legislative, and judicial bodies. This is not to deny that the amount of power that the constitution gave to the president allowed the regime to "operate outside existing state

institutions".[380] The Libyan regime, on the other hand, was structurally different from its counterpart in Egypt. As shown in chapter 5, Gaddafi's stateless state was practically devoid of modern institutions that operate independently of the Leader's centralized command and that of his sons. It was pretty much revolved around the Leader and other subordinate regime institutional facts that Gaddafi had effectively legitimized throughout his rule by establishing a collective recognition of them through coercive means.

The Libyan regime thus illustrated an idiosyncratic form of governance. Its decisions were not subject to institutional hampers whether in times of stability or those of turbulence. Moreover, it was based on ideology and was therefore less inclined to respond to unpredictable or unprecedented events in a flexible manner. Contrary to that, the regime in Egypt functioned within a state structure and did not adopt a rigid ideology. It was thus more disposed to act pragmatically and to deploy containment methods rather than confrontational ones right away.

On the one hand, the regime in Egypt deployed what many of its antagonists (including al-Jazeera's Azmi Bishara) thought were illusive techniques aiming to circumvent the popular discourse and prevent it from further expansion. Hence, when things seemed to be getting out of hand, President Mubarak warned of a scenario of chaos or of the Muslim Brotherhood seizing power in the case of his downfall, whereas Vice President Omar Suleiman expressed the regime's willingness to negotiate with opposition factions (and took preliminary steps in this regard). This dual strategy of intimidation and negotiations was thought to be one of the authorities' mechanisms of self-defense. Accordingly, the regime worked on enhancing public concerns of turmoil in parallel to showing its receptivity to efforts of collaboration. It also revealed its willingness to undergo minimal alterations in order to sustain its basic structure of power relations and to maintain the network of interests it comprises of. Nevertheless, it was

[380] Nathan Brown and Katie Bentivoglio, "Egypt's Resurgent Authoritarianism: It's a Way of Life", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 9, 2014, accessed February 10, 2015 http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/10/09/egypt-s-resurgent-authoritarianism-it-s-way-of-life

too late for these maneuvers to achieve tangible results, as the numbers of protesters increased and the military refrained from confronting them.

In Libya, on the other hand, the topic of tawreeth was rather taboo and was neither raised in the media nor openly discussed in the country's public sphere. Following the growth of protests in the Eastern part of the country, Saif al-Islam issued several televised statements in which he warned of the aftermath of the regime's downfall. In one of his early speeches, he "predicted" a vast civil war and massive bloodshed whereby "all of Libya will be destroyed" and Libyans "will need 40 years to reach an agreement on how to run the country, because everyone will want to be president or emir and everyone will want to run the country."[381] Saif's speculations of a bloody war for domination proved to be true in the years to follow. At that point, however, its seeds lay in the regime's increasing deficiency in terms of representation, after the collective recognition it assumed began vastly eroding in different parts of the country. Saif's depiction of the conflict as one pertaining to the nature of the regime in the case of Gaddafi's downfall (a republic with a president or an Islamic state ruled by an emir) and to the identity of its potential governors (who will fight to run the country) was an indirect admission that the battle in Libya was one of legitimacy. His statement, like many others that addressed Gaddafi's loyalists for motivational purposes or were meant to threaten and intimidate his antagonists, was one that revealed his authority and status as an heir of the Leader. Saif's attitude in this regard was opposite to that of Gamal Mubarak's, as the latter refrained from giving public speeches due to the absence of an official status legitimizing this function. The only formal political position he held was head of the National Democratic Party's politburo, which he ended up resigning from as a sign of concession.

Accordingly, the means used to maintain the power of Gaddafi and his regime were much more aggressive than those deployed by Mubarak and his loyalists. In the

[381] Lindey Hilsum, "Saif al-Islam Gaddafi: the prophet of his own doom", *the Guardian*, August 5, 2015, accessed November 3, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/05/saif-al-islam-gaddafi-prophet-of-own-doom-libya

former's case, there was a general disregard of state bureaucracies (state institutional facts), as they were highly dysfunctional and offered no added value to Gaddafi's aggregate power. Any form of concession regarding the function of the government and the authority it assumes, for example, would have jeopardized the Leader's status as the fundamental institutional fact having absolute powers and legitimizing the country's entire social order. In Egypt, on the other hand, dissolving the government was a bargaining chip in the hands of Mubarak. It was a means to appease the opposition and contain it by involving it in a process of dialogue whose aim was to legitimize minor reforms within the regime's existing structures. State bureaucracies were thus deployed by the regime to impede the uprising's momentum in parallel to the use of enforcement security measures.

Mubarak's patriarchal tone regarding Egyptians in general and protesters in particular was topped by Gaddafi's extreme rhetoric concerning his ideology and thus his status as the only source of legitimacy. Hence, for example, the Leader's reference to himself as *history* (as opposed to Mubarak's mere emphasis on his "historic achievements") was depicted as an overt expression of his megalomania (by al-Jazeera's guests). In general, Mubarak revealed a tendency to deploy political means hand in hand with security measures in order to contain the movement and counterframe its allegations, whereas Gaddafi based his response on rigid ideological grounds and his animosity towards protesters was unchallenged by institutional hampers.

Mubarak's reactions ranged from denial at the uprising's early stages to the deployment of policies that many protagonists of the social movement thought were illusive tactics aiming to abort fundamental change. His speeches never involved improvising and were rather prepared beforehand and always read from paper with an aim to deliver specific messages. Gaddafi, on the other hand, was often inconsistent in expressing his thoughts and actions, even when articulating them in the same speech. Most of his statements were fiery and improvised. They lacked proper structure and revealed an impatient urge to crush his opponents with little regard to the impact of his aggressive vocabulary on his image, as well as on internal and external reactions alike.

The Libyan regime's reaction to threat differed from that of its Egyptian counterpart due to the inherent characteristics it possessed. These characteristics made it more prone to use coercive means in order to maintain its long-sustained institutional facts. In Gaddafi's stateless state, however, it was difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between state institutional facts and regime institutional facts, as the regime had managed throughout more than four decades to redefine and reconstruct all state institutions and to absorb them under its ideological banners and idiosyncratic forms of rule. Thus, most Libyan state structures were bound to be instrumentally deployed in the service of the country's ruling elites due to their formation and ideological inclinations. Consequently, and contrary to the case of Egypt, toppling the regime was unlikely to be achieved without deconstructing state institutions. This difference posed a challenge to the Qatari network that had previously been engaging with peaceful uprisings and restrained regime responses. Thus, al-Jazeera reacted to this challenge by broadening its intellectual participation and diversifying its forms of engagement as shall be shown in the following.

Firstly, the identity of al-Jazeera's regular commentators on the Egyptian uprising, Azmi Bishara and Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, had a transnational dimension. Bishara was a prominent Pan-Arab intellectual with a vast experience in political activism. The Palestinian-Israeli who was expelled by Tel Aviv due to his endorsement of anti-Israel activism was practically a stateless intellectual. Al-Qaradawi, on the other hand, was one of the most recognized clerics with a massive web of connections with Islamist scholars and politicians from all around the globe. The two intellectuals took part in the construction of collective action frames during all the uprisings that al-Jazeera vehemently covered. Their contributions were not limited to one setting only, but were rather context-transcendent. Thus, their commentaries on the uprising in Libya were part of their general discursive engagements with the "Arab Spring" as a whole, and Egypt marked no exception to that. In the case of Libya, however, al-Jazeera's addition of local commentators served the purpose of presenting more informed and specialized contributions to its Arab audiences in general and Libyan spectators in particular.

Shammam contends that the network's Libyan intellectuals – himself being one of them - served in dissecting the Libyan landscape and engaging with it in detail, stressing the centrality of motivational vocabulary deployed in this regard.[382] As earlier explained, each of the three Libyan intellectuals had formerly been involved in their home country's domestic politics and were well connected with local politicians and intellectuals, some of whom later defected from the regime and established the NTC. Such links were of significant importance in a state where civil society and all forms of dissident political expression and activism had been effectively absent for decades. Contrary to Egypt, Libya's political landscape was nearly an undiscovered terrain, and with the lack of a coherent structure of state institutions, it was challenging for commentators to provide detailed analysis of the evolving discourse and to identify strategies for engagement. Thus, as previously explained, the Libyan intellectuals' motivational frames differed from those of Bishara and al-Qaradawi in terms of specificity, as they often addressed particular tribes and figures (political, military, and religious) in the course of constructing frames and inciting action. Accordingly, al-Qaradawi issued general calls for *all* the Libyan tribes to join the revolution, whereas Shammam and al-Sallabi were keen on addressing the *Gaddadfa* tribe in particular, and made reference to its past connections with neighboring tribal entities that have announced revolt, such as the *Suleiman* tribe. The same thing could be noticed in al-Sallabi's reference to the Free Officers by name (General Mustafa al-Kharroubi, General Abu Bakr Younes Jaber…) and his mention of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and of the strong connections he held with it.

Secondly, al-Jazeera's intellectuals focused on de-iconizing the Leader using all possible means, as humanizing this institutional fact serves in deconstructing it and was a prerequisite to condemn Gaddafi and hold him responsible for his deeds. In the case of Egypt, Mubarak and his deputy were both targeted by Bishara and al-Qaradawi. Bishara questioned Mubarak's "heroism" in the 1973 war and belittled his deputy by emphasizing that he lacks charisma and is merely a representative of the president. Al-

[382] Interview with Mahmoud Shammam. September 2015.

Qaradawi compared Mubarak to a pharaoh and used Quranic verses to describe him as "deaf, blind, and heartless". Yet neither of the two intellectuals severely scrutinized the personal traits and attitudes of the President of Egypt. Contrary to that, the Leader was depicted with disparaging descriptions, and his sanity was questioned and often said to be lacking. In this regard, al-Jazeera hosted a psychiatrist who affirmed that Gaddafi's reference to his dissidents as drug addicts was a projection of his own mental state on protesters; Bishara regarded his "obsessive tendency to describe himself" as an explicit "expression of his megalomania" and "narcissism"; al-Qaradawi described him as "irrational", "crazy", and "absurd", adding that he "thinks he is a philosopher" but in reality "is ridiculous"; whereas Shammam called him a "lunatic" and depicted him and his sons as "warlords", a term that was constantly used by other guest commentators as well. These examples in addition to others demonstrate that the Leader was systematically targeted for being the Libyan regime's central institutional fact. This form of engagement was not needed in the case of Egypt for two reasons; the first is the fact that the President, unlike the Leader, was not an extrapolitical phenomenon and functioned within a wider structural order, and the second is because, unlike Gaddafi, Mubarak showed signs of retreat on various occasions. Hence was Bishara's prognosis to offer him an exit.

Thirdly, al-Jazeera's intellectuals came from various backgrounds. Whether secular or Islamist, however, they were all bound to the social movements and expressive of their aspirations, usually in their most radical forms (i.e. calling for fundamental change rather than mild reform). Thus, they sometimes engaged in disputes with opposition factions and figures (also social movement protagonists) over the extent of change that the movements should be aiming for, as well as on the limits and nature of concessions that ought to be given to ruling elites. This was true in the case of Egypt, where the political opposition was still able to voice its dissent even during the uprising (whereas in Libya, the regime's crackdown on protests did not allow for this discourse to occur). Thus, in Egypt, al-Jazeera's intellectuals strongly argued against settling for governmental change rather than the resignation of the President and Vice President, the

dissolution of the cabinet and parliament, and the amendment of the constitution. According to their rationale, any form of negotiations with the regime would have to be restricted to outlining an exit strategy that serves the demands for fundamental change and secures a peaceful transition of power at the same time. In Libya, on the other hand, opposition figures were actively participating in shaping the discourse on al-Jazeera's platform as regularly hosted intellectuals. They were in connection with the main dissident bodies (political and military) acting on Libyan soil and thus did not need to engage in any form of on-air frame disputes.

Fourthly, the fact that Gaddafi's response to the uprising was an extremely violent one made it easier to counterframe regime narratives in Libya than it had been in Egypt, as well as to further emphasize religious motivational frames. In the case of Egypt, for example, Bishara used the term *revolution* to depict the protests very early on. Yet he preferred calling the movement a "reformist" one having a "revolutionary structure" when the regime seemed to be gaining momentum, before later explaining that the term fulfilled its meaning following Friday's "Day of Rage", as the social movement evolved to become inclusive, simultaneous, and representative. In the case of Libya, on the other hand, the regime's reaction to protests made it clear that for any real change to happen, it was crucial to uproot the existing social order through the most radical revolutionary means. Thus, the term was more comfortably used in the Libyan context and was not questioned in the same way it had been in Egypt. This particular frame held special significance in Libya, as it represented an additional challenge to the Leader's account of his regime as one being "in constant revolution". Gaddafi's animosity was also met with a different form of religious motivational framing. In Libya and Egypt, the Leader and the President were both depicted as *pharaohs* and sacrifice in the battle against them was glorified. However, whilst al-Qaradawi urged for endurance in Egypt, he and al-Sallabi called for active resistance in Libya and for "inflicting damage" upon the rebels' opponents. Al-Qaradawi's *fatwa* calling for the physical extermination of Gaddafi demonstrated the peak of this form of engagement. Moreover,

it was only in Libya that he (and al-Sallabi) made reference to *martyrdom* and that all forms of collaboration with the regime were depicted as *haram*.

Fifthly, al-Jazeera's intellectuals distinguished state institutional facts from regime institutional facts in Egypt and accordingly structured their motivational frames. Thus, for example, Bishara proposed to "test the army" and to push it to choose sides. At a later stage, he inferred that the military's flexibility with protesters meant it had given them the green light to head to the presidential palace. Bishara's positive regard of state institutional facts could also be noticed in his reference to the judiciary, especially when proposing an interim body headed by a judge to secure a peaceful transition of power. Similarly, al-Qaradawi's message to the army asking it to protect protesters reveals his good faith in the institution. However, this was not the case in Libya, as Gaddafi's sons heading the military's elite units were depicted as warlords and the regular army was rightfully believed to be almost out of order. Moreover, emphasis was put on external factors aiding the regime (mercenaries) to imply that its institutional facts did not rely on local collective recognition. Al-Jazeera's intellectuals began actively burning bridges with the Libyan regime in this context, as they called ministers, ambassadors, and army officers to defect from institutions that were bound to serve the existing power structures. Defection, a tool for delegitimizing the regime's institutional facts by depriving them from the element of collective intentionality, proved to be effective in a short lapse of time. Within only 12 days, Libya's representatives in the UN announced their support of the uprising, Minister of Immigration and Expatriates Ali Errishi resigned, followed by Minister of Justice Mustapha Abdel Jalil, Minister of Interior Abdel Fattah Younes, and Libya's chief prosecutor Abdel Rahman Al Aybar.[383] Many regular army units also turned against Gaddafi in compliance with the Minister of Defense's decision to defect, as their interest was to sabotage the status quo due to

[383] Chorin, *Exit Gaddafi*, 200-201.

Gaddafi's imposed restrictions on the army, whereas elite units preferred fighting with the Leader till the very end.[384]

Sixthly, Egypt's post-Mubarak interim phase was imagined to take place within existing power structures, whereas Libya's transition was in need for the construction of alternative institutional facts. Accordingly, in Egypt, al-Jazeera's intellectuals promoted the deconstruction of institutional facts legitimizing Mubarak's regime, particularly the constitution, yet they called for collaboration between protesters and other institutional facts that can guarantee the continued functioning of the state; the army and judiciary first and foremost. The *revolutionary legitimacy* that had emerged in Egypt as opposed to the *constitutional legitimacy* could be understood in this context. It represented a symbolic annulment of the constitution and a referendum legitimizing the establishment of a new one. In Libya, on the other hand, the social movement was aiming to replace its stateless state with another model. Protesters were calling for the creation of new state institutional facts rather than merely a deconstruction of regime institutional facts. Concomitantly, al-Jazeera (as an institution) and its intellectuals were promoting alternative political possibilities and facilitating their emergence. The channel was thus operating as an organic intellectual that actively contributed to the construction of new social realities.

[384] Taylor, *Military Responses to the Arab Uprisings*, 158.

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